



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Mainly dry and warm

(M45p) 40p

IN THE TABLOID

**BRIDGET JONES:
PAULA YATES
IS NOT ALONE**

IN THE TABLOID: FASHION

**ISSEY MIYAKE:
FABRIC
AS ART**

ESSAY PAGE 12

**TOURISTS IN BRITAIN:
They came, they saw – and
bought a huge magnet**

The seat of knowledge: After 25 years, they're finally about to finish ...



The final question: The black 'Mastermind' chair looks out to sea across Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands, where the last episode of the quiz show is being filmed today. The venue for the last-ever television test of cerebral fitness – hosted by Magnus Magnusson – is appropriately St Magnus Cathedral. The episode will be screened on 25 August. Photograph: Colin McPherson

Howard's 'triple deceit' – the Widdecombe charge

Kim Sengupta
and Anthony Bevins

Ann Widdecombe, the former prisons minister, is planning to make public details of three separate occasions on which, she says, Michael Howard misled the House of Commons over the dismissal of Derek Lewis from his post as director general of the Prison Service.

Following a day in which the Tory leadership election plunged into vitriolic personal recriminations, *The Independent* can reveal details of accusations Mr Howard could face in the House of Commons.

It is also believed that one reason William Hague stepped back from his proposed "dream ticket" alliance with the former Home Secretary is that his backers became aware of the politically-damaging claims Ms Widdecombe was going to make.

The former believes there may be as many as three instances when her previous boss misled Parliament. Ms Widdecombe has told friends that she has access to documents to pursue her campaign against Mr Howard.

One of the occasions, it is believed, was his response to the House of Commons about his involvement in the sacking of the governor of Parkhurst Prison, and his supposed dealings on the affair with Mr Lewis.

Mr Howard is on record as telling MPs: "... the Leader of the Opposition made three allegations: that I personally told Mr Lewis that the governor of Parkhurst should be suspended immediately; that when Mr Lewis objected as it was an operational matter, I threatened to instruct him to do it; and when Mr Lewis further objected, I told the operational director of the Prison Service, by fax, that I would announce it in the House of Commons that day."

"Each and every one of the allegations is untrue."

If Ms Widdecombe gets the chance to lay her case before the Commons, Mr Howard could be questioned on whether his unequivocal statement was totally accurate.

Ms Widdecombe will see the Speaker of the House of Commons tomorrow to arrange how she can present her allegations to fellow MPs. Her public intervention, many Tory MPs think, would fatally weaken the leadership challenge of Mr Howard, a man Ms Widdecombe feels "not fit to lead the Conservative Party or the country".

She has told friends: "I am sure a way can be found. I am not going to present documents myself, because former ministers do not do that. Nor am I going to repeat private conversations with senior civil servants."



Ann Widdecombe: Describes Michael Howard as 'not fit to lead'

"But if Mr Howard denies the matter that is put to him I shall get in touch with Sir Robin Butler (the Cabinet Secretary) and ask him to intervene. I shall also ask for the documents to be made public under disclosure."

"Michael Howard is a Houdini character, he has got away with an awful lot in the past, he is a Teflon Man. But even people like him cannot depend on luck all the time."

Yesterday, Ms Widdecombe was incensed by what she sees as the Howard camp disseminating "disgusting smears" about her. She said: "It seems he wants to play dirty, he is going to

regret it." She was vehemently objecting to what she believes was "plant" in the *Daily Mail* yesterday that she, a "convent-educated spinster" had been wooed by Mr Lewis with chocolates and flowers, and bad as a result become his partisan supporter when he was sacked by Mr Howard.

Ms Widdecombe called this "amazing... a demonstrable lie... There were, alas, no chocolates. The only flowers were the ones I sent to Mrs Lewis after her husband was sacked. I got bawled out by Michael Howard for my pains."

She was backed up last night by Mr Lewis who said he had never sent any chocolates to Ms Widdecombe but he and his wife sent flowers to the former minister on two occasions more than a year after he was sacked.

With the redoubtable Ms Widdecombe on the warpath against him, Mr Howard's campaign team tried a damage limitation exercise – issuing two glowing tributes from "former colleagues" and "new MPs".

In a press release, headed "Former colleagues back Howard", five people who had worked with Mr Howard as a minister said: "He has proved himself as an outstanding minister and colleague. We believe that he is the right man to lead the Conservative Party."

The new MPs said: "He has the vigour, experience and determination

needed to provide clear leadership... and has proven himself capable of defeating Tony Blair."

Mr Howard told ITN's Channel 4 News last night that he had taken the right decision in the public interest as far as the sacking of Mr Lewis was concerned.

"If Ann wants to make any specific allegations about my conduct, I shall deal with them honestly, fairly and comprehensively," he said. "I shall meet any charges that are made."

Asked whether his chances of leadership victory had been killed by the attack, he said: "Far from it. I think that those who will be making this judgement in the parliamentary party over the next few weeks want someone whose record shows that he is not going to shrink the tough decisions that are needed to restore the fortunes of our party."

He added: "That is the kind of leadership that I believe our party needs. The campaign is going well and I am confident of my prospects."

Peter Lilley claimed yesterday that he had barred Ms Widdecombe from his campaign for the Tory leadership because of her behaviour towards Mr Howard. "I do not think it right for anybody in the course of this campaign to indulge in personal criticisms of candidates," he said.

Stuck up the Cakehole in wildest protest yet

Steve Boggan

Matt the tunneller managed to laugh when he pointed at the crack running along the low, impossibly tight ceiling of the clay shaft. "There's no smoking in that bit," he said. "And the crack's getting wider."

Something to bear in mind, perhaps, for the bailiffs, or police, or military types who will have to extract him and at least two other eco-warriors from the Cakehole, the most ambitious protest tunnel ever built under the path of a construction project.

The tunnel, running 50ft deep and in at least five different directions, has been gouged out

of the Bollin Valley that will soon be chomped up to make way for Manchester Airport's £172m second runway. Possibly within days – certainly within weeks – the Cakehole and the three people who currently live in it will become as much household names as Swanzy – aka Daniel Hooper – and Big Mama, the tunnel at the A30 in Fairmile, Devon, that kept him from the bailiffs for a week in January.

Yesterday, as police filmed the entrance to the tunnel in preparation for their assault on it, *The Independent* was allowed through the bolted trapdoor with its "Stop!" sign and down into the shaft. It is a phenomenal piece of work by up to

40 people, none of whom have mining skills, but only three of its prime movers – Muppet Dave, 30, Matt, 23, and Denise – are expected to be locked inside when eviction comes.

The tunnel winds and twists at heights and widths ranging from about 14in to only about 8in. Most is shored up with wood or concrete, but some sections, called "wormholes", are tight, round and deliberately left unshored. Small, low rooms are dug out at intervals to serve as a pantry and bedrooms. And at least one of the bedrooms – with an entrance less than 6in wide, has an escape tunnel running off it.

Despite attempts to ventilate the tunnel with a fan powered



by a 12-volt battery, the air is stale and damp. Movement is difficult, and within the first few yards, those making an assault on the tunnel will have to negotiate bolted doors, sharp turns and 90-degree vertical twists. But the tunnellers insist there are more surprises ahead – de-

signed not to harm but to hinder.

"We intend to make life as difficult as possible for them to get us out and begin destroying this valley," said Muppet Dave, a little eight-stone tunneller on his third project. Softly spoken and sporting a red and green

Through the Cakehole: Muppet Dave crawls around inside the intricate tunnel network designed to confound the bailiffs, who are set to arrive within days

Photograph: Martin Rickett

Mohican, he cut his teeth at Fairmile where he lasted only half a day less than Swampy.

Yesterday, as Randall Hobbart, the Under Sheriff of Cheshire, read the final eviction notice on the site, near more than 10 other tunnels and beneath sturdily constructed tree-houses, Matt was preparing to be locked under ground.

He was asked how he would feel when, after weeks breathing the same air as his pursuers, he finally came face to face with them.

"I don't know, because it will be my first time," he said. "But everyone tells me that, while they're chipping you out, they're actually very nice."

Labour to raise £1bn in sell-off of airwaves

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

The Labour Government is to launch a £1bn "privatisation" of the business airwaves, raising extra windfall revenue from companies who run minicab businesses, mobile phones and pagers.

The surprise measure fell into the lap of Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, who inherited it from Ian Lang, her Tory predecessor, who was said yesterday "not to have got round to it".

The Prime Minister's office said that the Wireless Telegraphy Radio Spectrum Bill would give the Government power to auction off licences of radio frequencies, for set periods, in particularly congested areas like cities.

At the moment, the licences are sold off at cost, raising only £40m, and the auction process is expected to guarantee that the bidders do not take more of the frequencies than they need.

It is estimated that – where the new charge applies – the new legislation could add about 50p a week to the cost of each minicab, and, possibly, 10p a week to the cost of a mobile phone or pager.

A government source said that businesses which use the frequencies – excluding the broadcasters – contribute an estimated £12bn to the economy and are thought to be expanding at the rate of about 700 jobs a week.

The actual detail of the legislation is still to be decided, but the frequencies are to be auctioned off for fixed periods of time, which means that the measure falls short of full-scale privatisation.

Ministers will have no qualms

about the action, because it raises much-needed money from a booming business sector which has been provided with a "cut-price licence to print money", as one Whitehall source put it.

The new Bill will be one of 26 to be included in the Queen's Speech legislative programme to be announced by the Monarch in the formal State Opening of Parliament this morning.

After a meeting between a group of Dunblane parents, Tony Blair, Cherie Booth, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, at Number 10 yesterday, the Prime Minister's office said that Mr Blair had given them an assurance that all handguns would be banned and that he would override any resistance from the Lords.

It was disclosed last night that the Commons Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, will make an early statement on the status of the two Sinn Féin MPs, who have said that they will go to Westminster, but will not take their oath of allegiance to the Queen; a requirement imposed by law on all serving MPs.

Without taking the oath, MPs are not allowed to speak or vote in the Chamber of the House – or draw their salary. But it had been suggested that they might be entitled to office space and other facilities.

Miss Boothroyd is expected to rule that elected Members have no entitlement to use the facilities of the Palace of Westminster until they have taken the oath of allegiance – thereby restricting the access of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness to the Commons precincts.

Dunblane pledge, page 6

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QUICKLY
Bomb in Peking
A home-made bomb exploded in a central Peking park, next to China's leadership compound, killing one person. Page 10

news

significant shorts

Loyalist killing sparks fears of 'new nightmare' in Ulster

The killing this week by loyalists of an elderly Catholic man has been followed by a warning that Northern Ireland could be on the brink of "a new nightmare of suffering and uncertainty".

The man, 61-year-old Sean Brown, was abducted by unknown loyalists just before midnight on Monday as he locked up the Gaelic Athletic Association premises in the nationalist village of Bellaghy in County Londonderry. After a struggle he was bundled into his own car and driven away. The vehicle was later found ablaze some miles away. Mr Brown's body was lying nearby. He had been shot. The local parish priest, Father Andrew Dolan, said of Mr Brown, who was the father of six children: "He was very much a Christian gentleman." There is speculation that the loyalists responsible might belong to a new organisation which recently broke away from the Ulster Volunteer Force. One of its leading members is said to be in prison. **David McKitterick**

Carer found guilty of ill-treatment

The director of two private homes for mentally disabled people was yesterday convicted of ill-treating one of the residents in her care. Angela Rowe, 39, was found guilty of ill-treatment through grabbing the resident's hair and pulling her downstairs. Rowe, of Windsor, Berkshire, has been already convicted of two cases of wilfully neglecting residents at Stoke Place Mansion House and Stoke Green House, the homes she and her late husband, Gordon, ran in Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire. The jury at Kingston Crown Court also convicted one of Rowe's senior care supervisors, Lorraine Field, 42, of Stoke Poges, of two counts of ill-treating residents. Another supervisor, Desmond Tully, 33, of Exeter, Devon, was cleared of ill-treating a resident. The jury will return today to consider a further four charges against the defendants. **Louise Jury**

The real thing gets its bottle back

The real thing is back. Glass Coca-Cola bottles in their original shape are returning to Britain for the first time in 20 years. A brand new 330ml bottle will be on sale in selected bars and clubs during the next few weeks, with distribution widening over the year. A spokeswoman for the company said the move came after research "confirmed that consumers still see drinking from the glass



Director's cut: Tom Clarke sitting it out at Cannes yesterday (Photograph: Brian Harris)

Life's a beach for Labour's new minister for the movies

Perhaps it was the sight of all those yachts and designer swim wear. But it took the Cannes Film Festival to provoke a New Labour minister to talk about his socialist youth. And that was only after bewailing the lack of disabled people in movies, and praising a film that gave careers a high profile.

Tom Clarke made his presence felt here yesterday. Britain's first ever minister for films did not exactly cut a dash on the Croisette. But as the only man in town to parade an old suit, a paté, and a paunch and still be continually smiling, he turned heads.

Bypassing the glitz and the exclusive parties, Mr Clarke headed straight for the promoters of a film on Alzheimer's disease. "This is wonderful," he said, and he wasn't referring to the casting of real life daughter and mother Emma Thompson and Phyllida Law in *The Winter Guest*. "I'm delighted," he went on. "That one: it's about Scotland; and two: it's about caring, because careers have felt left out."

It demands considerable dexterity to move from Scottish spokesman to shadow disability minister to minister of state with responsibility for films and make it a seamless progression. Mr Clarke is nothing if not

deft. He told a British Film Institute meeting here there must be more disabled actors, directors and producers. And when asked about grass acting he singled out Ewan McGregor's roles in *Trainspotting* and Jane Austen's *Emma* to pronounce: "He has a great talent in mastering that English accent."

New Labour has brought a new attitude to film. Two years ago Steve Donnell as Secretary of State for National Heritage came to Cannes and made the wonderful gaffe of thinking the beautiful French actress Jeanne Moreau was a man.

Mr Clarke on the other hand is not only a minister who knows his films, he has actually made one and entered it for the Cannes Film Festival, albeit the Cannes Amateur Film Festival.

Back in 1972, the then 30-year-old president of the British Amateur Cinematographers Society directed *Give Us A Goal*, a 15-minute short about Scottish soccer teams Queen of the South and Clydebank. It was not easy to find any of the world's movie makers here yesterday who could recall it. But then it is not easy to find anyone in the stands at Queen of the South or Clydebank who can recall it.

David Lister - Cannes

Bond trader tells of pay cut after race complaint

A high-flying bond salesman claimed yesterday that his pay was cut by one fifth after he made a complaint of racial discrimination against a partner at the City bank where he worked.

James Curry, a black American Harvard graduate, made the allegations during an industrial tribunal case against Goldman Sachs, which made him redundant in 1995.

Mr Curry, who at one time earned \$1.25 million a year, is claiming unfair dismissal and racial discrimination.

He told the tribunal in Stratford, east London, that he arranged a meeting with Mark Winkelmann, the bank's global head of fixed income sales, in 1994 to express concerns about the attitude of Bracebridge Young, his departmental head.

"I was concerned about my career, that I was being treated unfairly," he said. Asked by Tim Brennan, solicitor for Goldman Sachs, how Mr Winkelmann had reacted, Mr Curry (pictured)



replied: "He looked out of the window."

Mr Curry, 43, said: "It is very scary to take on your firm and make complaints against them. Then when you find that the response is a drop in your compensation of 20 per cent by the person that you complained about, then it is additionally difficult."

Goldman Sachs denies that Mr Curry was discriminated against or unfairly dismissed. The company says he was made redundant because his performance had deteriorated, and as part of a cost cutting exercise.

The cases continues today **Kathy Marks**

Ashes memorial for man who died after drinks binge

The ashes of a former militant activist who died after a drinking binge to celebrate Labour's election victory will be contested in an annual cricket match in his memory.

Keith Narey, 50, a second cousin of Bradford South Labour MP Gerry Sutcliffe, was found dead outside his Bradford home last Saturday after a marathon two-day drinking session.

Regulars at his local pub, the Brewery Tap, have bought an urn to hold Mr Narey's ashes, which will be on show in the pub. Mr Narey umpired for the pub's cricket team, and it will now hold commemorative matches against a team from the Bradford Campaign for Real Aie.

The real Ashes, played for between England and Australia, were first awarded in 1882 after the first Australian Test victory on English soil. Although inspired by a newspaper death notice for English cricket which said the ashes would be taken to Australia, the real Ashes never leave Lord's.

Like the real thing, Mr Narey's ashes will remain at the pub regardless of which team wins.

POLITICS

Pro-Lifers outstripped by Loonies in popularity test

Anti-abortion campaigners who contested seats in the general election polled on average only 345 votes - and fewer votes than the Monster Raving Loony Party when they contested the same constituency. Research by the National Secular Society found that candidates who stood on a specifically "pro-life" ticket received a total of 17,600 votes throughout the 51 seats in which they stood.

"Before the election, anti-abortion campaigners were threatening a US-style abortion war if MPs didn't heed their message. The electorate, however, had other ideas," said Keith Porteus Wood, general secretary of the society. "They came last in 18 seats, and when they contested seats with the Monster Raving Loony Party, the loonies prevailed each time."

A spokeswoman for the Pro-Life Alliance said that it had been pleased with the results it had had "We stood on the most difficult election platform of all time - abolishing the 1967 Abortion Act." She added: "That around 20,000 people voted for us we find very reassuring."

Glenda Cooper

TELEVISION

Auntie straightens her skirts

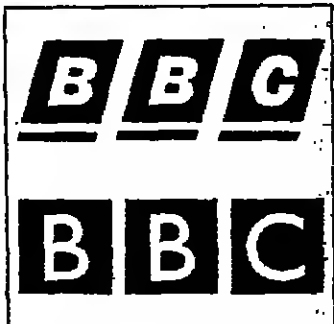
The BBC's new logo, will straighten up the diagonal letters, give them a smoother, rounder look and remove the coloured bars beneath them, the corporation confirmed yesterday.

It is part of a plan to save money and create a single worldwide corporate identity which will work in any medium - especially the Internet and digital television.

The new logo will cost £1.7m-a-year for three years. Making its debut on screen next October, it will gradually be seen on all other products during the three years.

The existing logo, first unveiled in 1986, has diagonal edges, which do not look good in a medium made entirely of horizontal and vertical lines. The revised, upright version will sit more comfortably on television and computer screens.

The BBC said the advent of digital television, bringing an avalanche of new channels and services, had forced an image rethink. With straighter letters in square blocks, the logo becomes more modern, while retaining its "BBC-ness", said consultant designer Martin Lambie-Nairn.



MEDICINE

Neurosurgeons hail breakthrough

Surgeons yesterday unveiled a "virtual reality" technique for brain operations, which they claim will dramatically improve the accuracy and safety of complex operations. Claimed to be the most advanced of its kind in Britain, the £180,000 system shows surgeons the exact location of scalpels and other instruments, within a 5-D image of the inside of the brain.

The "neuro-navigation" system involves tiny ceramic balls on the surgeon's manual instruments.

These are detected by two near-infrared cameras which, with other equipment, construct a VR image of where the instruments are within a 3-D scan of the inside of the brain. This enables surgeons to "see" inside the head and brain to within an accuracy of just three tenths of a millimetre.

The system was displayed at the Institute of Neurosciences at Glasgow's Southern General Hospital, where surgeons described it as "the most important breakthrough in neurosurgery in decades".

The technique has already been used six times at the institute. Consultant neurosurgeon Garth Cruikshank said: "You can see more clearly where the tumour or problem is, and you can access it by a more direct route."

HEALTH

Skin cancer risk identified

A person's risk of developing the skin cancer, melanoma, can be determined from the number, size and appearance of moles on their skin, US scientists say. Counting the number of small and large moles and those with a normal or abnormal appearance could provide early warning of the disease, which is the fastest growing cancer, researchers say.

A study of more than 700 melanoma patients treated at melanoma clinics at the Universities of California and Pennsylvania found those with a "substantial" number of small moles, less than five millimetres across, had a doubled risk of the disease and those with a substantial number of small and large moles - more than eight millimetres across - had a four-fold increased risk. One abnormal mole - with an irregular or indistinct outline - was associated with a two-fold risk, while 10 or more indicated a 12-fold increased risk. **Jeremy Laurance**

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Low note as Covent Garden's tough cookie exits in haste

Paul Valley

Just when you think the cacophony of chaos at the Royal Opera House has reached its miserable crescendo, some new dismal event occurs to add more to the discord.

Yesterday the ill-fated temple of culture announced that its new chief executive, Genista McIntosh, who had only been in the job four months, had left "due to ill-health". You would be hard pressed to find anyone in the arts world who thought there was not more to it than that. Despite tributes from Lord Chiddingfold, chairman of the Royal Opera House, insiders were in no doubt Ms McIntosh, once described as the most powerful woman in British theatre, had been forced out by a series of disagreements with the opera establishment.

Those who worked with her at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford and at the National Theatre, where she was until recently Richard Eyre's number two, yesterday expressed some surprise. "She's a tough cookie. But it wouldn't be surprising if the job has made her ill. The opera house is a nightmare job and she was the only professional there among a bunch of amateurs."

Morale at the opera house fell to a new low. It was not high in the first place. Some 280 have been made redundant in readiness for closure of the building in July, when a £213m redevelopment takes place. Controversy has surrounded the refurbishment (under consideration for 22 years and under intense planning since September 1988, when Sir Jeremy Isaacs became general director). Recently the chairman of the Arts Council, Lord Gowrie, attacked him for failing properly to plan the closure, leaving the opera and ballet companies homeless and bequeathing a "shambles" to his successors.

Even the announcement of the season-in-exile last month was surrounded by disorder.



Mary Allen: New appointment

Few were in any doubt that she had been forced out of the job by a series of disagreements

The press conference was announced and postponed without explanation. Insiders revealed yesterday that confusion arose because of a "major row" between Ms McIntosh and Vivien Duffield, who chairs the Royal Opera House Trust.

Ms Duffield, daughter of the late Sir Charles Clow - the tycoon who pioneered the hostile takeover bid - is a formidable power in Bow Street. The two women had not got on. Ms Duffield's style is described as abrasive, vulgar and terrifying by contrast with Ms McIntosh's, which is said to be non-confrontational. Matters came to a head when Ms Duffield refused to give the Trust's approval to the new season's

plans, even though they had been approved by the board, on which she sits.

There were disagreements, too, with Lord Chiddingfold. The two disagreed about, among other things, ticket prices, which Ms McIntosh wanted to bring down permanently to make the company more accessible. The animus was evident during the new season press conference, when it was eventually held.

"Lord Chiddingfold repeatedly interrupted her and doled with her in a generally patronising manner," said one observer. "And it is striking that the press release announcing her departure also contains news of her successor. No wonder people think it is a coup."

Ms McIntosh's successor is to be Mary Allen, secretary of the Arts Council. Her arrival reunites her with Lord Chiddingfold, who was chairman of the Arts Council's Lottery board when it awarded £76m to the Opera House. Ms Allen, who has no experience running a major theatre, administered the grant. She takes up her new post in September.

Friends say that Ms McIntosh had lost weight recently. No one less, they were taken aback by her sudden departure. The decision was taken only on Friday and members of the board were contacted by telephone over the weekend to sanction the appointment of Ms Allen. "It is a tremendous disappointment because Jenny has done so well," said one director, the composer Michael Berkeley. "But the chairman said that she is ill and this job is very stressful for anyone who is not completely fit." Keith Cooper, the company's director of corporate affairs, insists there has been no coup. He was yesterday telling callers he could not disclose the nature of Ms McIntosh's illness, only that she had left the office already "and gone away to recuperate". Ms McIntosh was unavailable for comment.



Dramatic departure: Genista McIntosh explained her resignation as a matter of ill-health, but colleagues said there was a deeper problem. Photograph: Silvan Lewin

First degree artist scoops richest prize for painting



Max Mossop: 'His work is as much to do with architecture as painting'

Louise Jury

A student at the Royal College of Art has won Britain's richest arts prize only weeks before his final degree show.

Max Mossop, 34, had been wondering how he was going to afford a studio at the end of his studies when he scooped the NatWest Arts Prize of £26,000 yesterday. He beat a record 700 entries for the award which is for artists under the age of 35 who concentrate on painting and drawing.

Interest in the competition has been seen as part of a renaissance in painting after the rash of video, sculpture and installation work as epitomised by artists such as Damien Hirst and his dead-animal works.

However, the winner played down these divisions. Mr Mossop, who originally trained as an architect, said: "I think it's a shame that there's this great opposition made between painting and installation and conceptual work. I think it's a bit petty."

His works are displayed with the 10 other shortlisted artists at NatWest's new Leobury Gallery in the City of London. Mr Mossop, who was born in Lancashire but lives in London, said he was thrilled to be among them.

He leaves college in July and the money will now pay for a studio for five years.

Rosemary Harris, who chaired the judging panel and is a former curator at the Tate Gallery in London, said it had been a very difficult decision to select the winner.

"One of the things about Max's work was it combined both painting skills and doing something quite different in innovation. His work is as much to do with architecture as painting."

The prize was set up six years by NatWest to encourage innovation and technical skills in younger painters. In addition to being exhibited, the 10 other shortlisted artists also receive £1,000.

Much of the inspiration for the prize came from Lord Alexander of Weodoo, chairman of the NatWest Group since 1989. "The most important single-owner collection of Impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings of recent years was sold for \$92.8m (£57.5m) yesterday. The auction of the collection of Wall Street financier John Loeb lived up to expectations with a record price for a Toulouse-Lautrec and near-records for Cézanne and Matisse."

Cannibal spiders munch their way out of extinction



Ladybird spider. Photograph: Roger Key

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

Things are looking up for the cannibalistic ladybird spider, one of the rarest and most colourful in Britain. Conservationists have made a breakthrough in captive breeding techniques which could secure its survival.

It had been thought that the spider, whose mother makes the ultimate sacrifice of feeding herself to her young, had become extinct in its British haunts on the Isle of Wight, Dorset and Cornwall. But in the 1980s it was discovered living in a single patch of heathland, smaller than a football pitch, in Dorset.

The first priority to safeguard this tiny remnant was to start clearing the pine trees and rhododendrons which were encroaching on its heathland. This worked - the number of adult spiders in the isolated colony soared to about 100.

The next step was to breed the half-inch long ladybird spider in captivity, so that new colonies could be founded elsewhere in the wild from the pool of kept arachnids.

To develop successful techniques for captive breeding, it was necessary to practise on a small number of ladybird spiders taken from Jutland in Denmark. They are fairly rare there, but at last they are not restricted to a single site.

Biologist and arachnophile Pat Wislowski was thrilled to witness a mating in captivity at his home near Ormskirk, Lancashire where he keeps the Danish imports. And now many of the babies have hatched out, survived their winter hibernation and are growing.

Dr Roger Key of English Nature, the Government's wildlife conservation arm, said the plan was to take some of the English ladybird spiders next year, breed them in captivity then release their young into suitable habitat to found new colonies. "We're really just practising with the Danish ones - we wouldn't release them into the wild here because their genes are likely to be slightly different from the native stock."

The spiders live in burrows and have silk trip wires radiating out to catch insects as large as bumble bees. The male has striking black and vermilion colours and emerges from underground only during the breeding season in May. The female stays in her burrow all of her life after digging it, and she lays up to 80 eggs. Once they hatch her babies eat their mother's regurgitated food and then, as she weakens and dies, they start to consume her.

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Blitz on maths to use ideas from Far East

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Whole-class teaching, with a difference, will form part of the Government's drive to fight poor numeracy in schools announced yesterday.

A new numeracy task force will examine whole-class teaching of the sort used in Asian countries such as Taiwan. The teacher teaches the whole class at once but ensures that all children take part in the lesson.

The task force, under Professor David Reynolds of Newcastle University, will also investigate whether calculators should be banned for under-eights, the best way to teach multiplication tables and whether parents should be given Taiwanese-style text books to help their four and five-year-olds with maths.

Professor Reynolds said the group was not looking at a return to the type of whole-class teaching used in the Fifties, when teachers lectured at some children snoozed at the back of the class.

Instead, they were interested in "interactive" whole-class teaching used in Taiwan and tried out recently in the London

Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Ashia Straker, director of the National Numeracy Project set up by the Conservative government in January, said that so far, interactive whole-class teaching appeared to be working well. "It is having particular benefits for children with special educational needs."

The task force aims to further the new Government's aim that 75 per cent of 11-year-olds should reach the expected standard in maths by 2002. The target for literacy will be 80 per cent. At present the figures are 55 per cent and 57 per cent.

Professor Reynolds said one of the biggest challenges for schools was to reduce the range of achievement which was larger in Britain than elsewhere.

Common text books, he suggested, might be one way of overcoming the problem. In Taiwan, parents were given text books to help their children even before they started school. In this country by contrast, every school had its own worksheets.

The task force will also investigate whether calculators, used more extensively in British primary schools than in many other countries, are contributing to

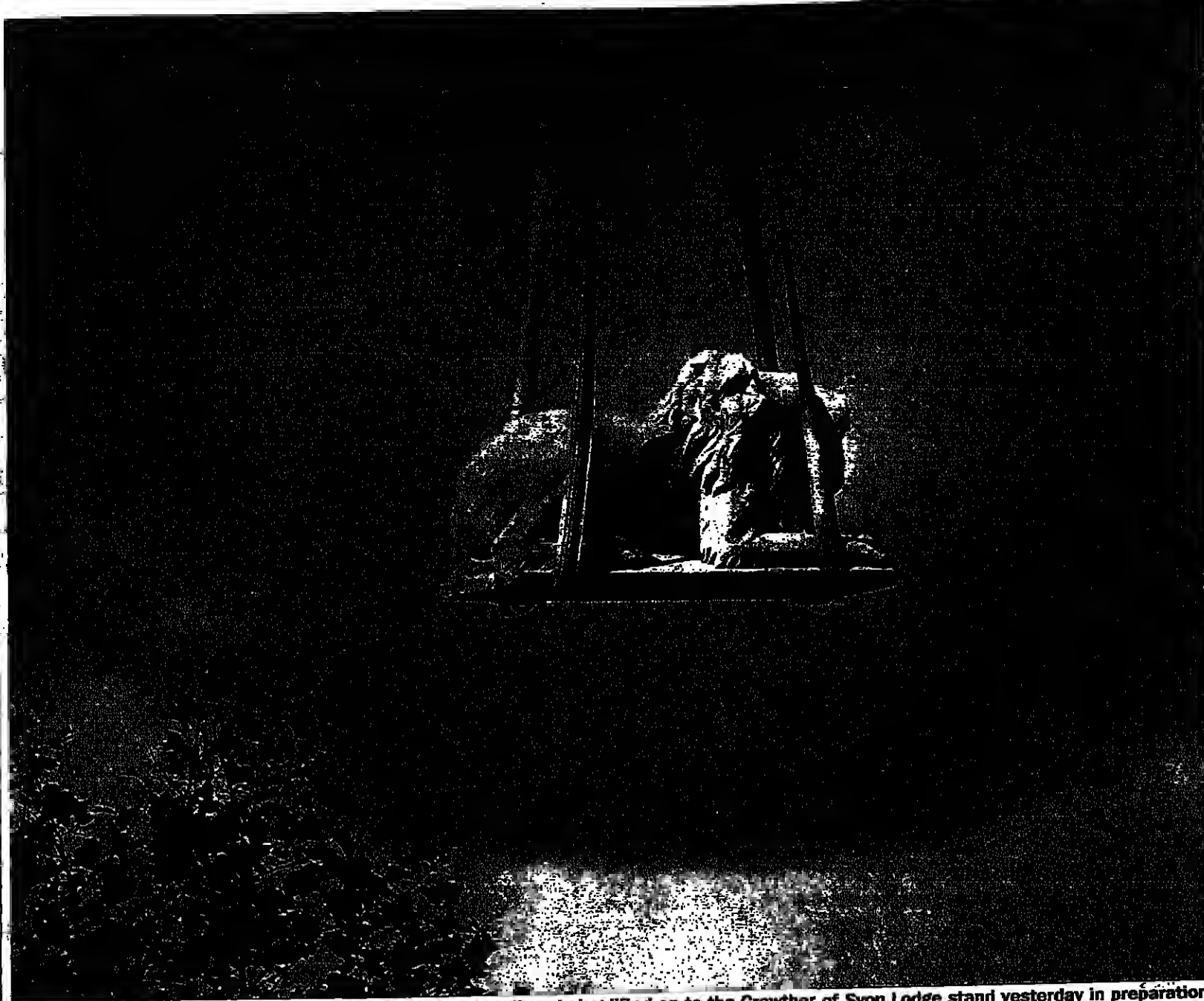
our poor showing in maths. David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education, said: "Children under eight need to know that calculators exist but they must also have the basic tools of calculation themselves."

He said the Government was prepared to be judged on its success in meeting the literacy and numeracy targets. "I know these are tough targets but we must have clear goals which can drive all our other work on raising standards in schools."

But David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "The experience of the Barking and Dagenham project proved conclusively that additional money is needed if schools are going to have the necessary support to achieve the targets."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said his members would have no difficulty with a return to whole-class teaching. "They never wanted to abandon it in the first place, until they were told to do so by teacher trainers, academics and advisers - and politicians."

Leading article, page 11



Resting place: One of a pair of 18th-century Portland stone lions being lifted on to the Crowther of Syon Lodge stand yesterday in preparation for the Chelsea Flower Show, which opens next Tuesday. Photograph: John Voos

Girls overtake boys in the drugs league

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

Teenage girls are for the first time taking more of some drugs, including amphetamines and tranquillisers, than boys, according to the country's largest survey of children.

Girls aged 12-15 also admitted to experimenting with more solvents, and in a smaller age range, cocaine and barbiturates, than boys of the same age. Overall, the unpublished study, in which 22,000 children in England were questioned, indicates that about two in five young people will have taken drugs by the age of 16.

The trend for increasing drug use among girls will cause grave concern among parents. There is already evidence that teenage girls smoke more than boys and are drinking increasing amounts of alcohol.

But until now, research has suggested that teenage boys



For amphetamines, 9.6 per cent of girls aged 14-15 said they had misused the drug - compared with 8.9 per cent of boys. In the 13- to 14-year-old category, girls were also the biggest consumers.

Girls aged 14-15 also took more tranquillisers - 2.7 per cent compared with two per cent - than boys. There was also a tiny proportion higher in the group aged 13-14.

Female users of cocaine were 0.1 per cent more common than 14-15-year-old boys, although only 1.2 per cent admitted having taken the drug. There was a similar difference for 13-14-year-old barbiturate users. Equal numbers of boys and girls - about four in ten - were offered drugs.

Cannabis had been tried by nearly a third of the sample, followed by amphetamine, LSD, magic mushrooms, solvents and ecstasy. Overall, boys still take more illegal substances than girls.



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Full-time job. Part-time childhood.

Sangli is only nine but already he talks about his childhood in the past tense. It ended the day he started work, at just eight years old. Since then, he will tell you, life is a slog every day of the week. The seven mile walk to find a good patch, the nine hours kneeling in the dust mending shoes, the miserable 30p or so earned.

There is no play. The word doesn't enter his vocabulary. And no education, unless you include the kind you get on the streets, like how to look after yourself when a customer gets rough.

Why does he do it? Because his parents are so poor that they need, really need, his 30p a day to help pay for food and clothes.

If Sangli were the only child in the world working his childhood away it would be one too many. As it is he is one of some 55 million in India alone. Christian Aid works to combat child labour by campaigning for decent adult wages and improving families' living standards so that parents can afford to take their kids off the street.

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Chunnel staff at fault over train fire

Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

Numerous mistakes were made by "inadequately trained" Eurotunnel staff on the night of the Channel Tunnel freight shuttle train fire last year, a report said yesterday.

Emergency procedure instructions were "forgotten, incorrectly applied, applied too late or applied in the wrong order", the report from the Channel Tunnel Safety Authority said. It blamed the poor response on the company's complicated emergency procedures and poor staff training.

The incident was more serious than it should have been because the emergency procedures were too complex and demanding and the staff on duty had not been adequately trained to carry them out," said Roderick Allison, chairman of the safety authority.

The findings also pointed out that there were "errors and delays" dealing with the blaze.

Safety moves

- Eurotunnel must abandon its "drive-through" policy, which allows burning trains to continue through the tunnel.
- All rolling stock must be tested to ensure it does not "leak" smoke into the interior.
- Eurotunnel staff to be re-trained to cope with emergencies.
- Any member of staff failing a competence assessment should be removed from duty, re-tested and re-trained.
- All control-centre procedures to be reviewed and simplified.
- Staff must be tested regularly in order to maintain levels of competence.

and there was early confusion about the seriousness of the fire.

The authority made 36 recommendations to ensure there would be no repetition of the incident, which led to 30 lorry drivers requiring hospital treatment after being trapped in a fume-filled carriage.

One of the most damaging revelations was that Eurotunnel's system for handling a fire alert was revealed to be deficient in a major emergency exercise eight days before November's blaze. The report points out that five of the first six fire detectors inside the tunnel only gave unconfirmed alarms, even though four security guards saw flames up to six feet high on the doomed goods train before it entered the tunnel.

It also says staff failed to halt other trains in the tunnel to prevent smoke and fumes building up and that Eurotunnel managers failed to act on a July 1996

staff-performance audit that revealed "many areas of concern" in the rail control centre.

Despite the report's tone, it did not recommend that Eurotunnel change its open lattice-sided wagons, which carry freight lorries and have been criticised by experts who believe the design fanned flames as the train raced through the tunnel.

This theory was supported by the Fire Brigades Union, which called for the wagons to be banned. Mike Fordham, the secretary, said the fire was "a disaster waiting to happen that happened."

Eurotunnel disagreed, and has more than 70 similar wagons on order. "We welcome the safety authority's contribution and accept its criticism," said a spokesman for Eurotunnel.

Among the report's recommendations was a requirement that Eurotunnel abandon the present policy of drivers taking a train through the tunnel in the event of a fire so the blaze could be tackled more easily on the outside. It said the "drive-through" strategy failed on this occasion after an alarm caused the driver to stop and then the overhead power supply was lost.

The safety authority added that Eurotunnel should improve training of all staff involved in emergencies, with special training called for control-centre operators.

The authority said its report did not give a "green light" for Eurotunnel to restart freight shuttle services, which have been halted since the fire. The company, however, claim it will be able to resume goods services next month.

The authority said it would be advising the Anglo-French Intergovernmental Commission separately about Eurotunnel's proposals to restart.

Jeremy Becht, Kent's chief fire officer, who sits on the safety authority, said the criticisms expressed by the authority "do not immediately render the entire system dangerous or unsuitable. As a fire officer I would prefer to see Eurotunnel using a closed design for its freight shuttle wagons," he said, adding that he had no doubt the existing freight shuttles would "eventually be phased out".

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, called for a clear timetable for implementing the recommendations of the CISA's report, which he described as "an indictment of poor operating procedures and practices by Eurotunnel."

"Its recommendations for the future are addressed to Eurotunnel and I expect the company to implement them promptly and in full."

DAILY POEM

The Knight's Tomb

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the wings of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone, - and the birch in its stead is grown.
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust:
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

"The Knight's Tomb" - from the new Penguin Classics edition of Coleridge's *Complete Poems*, edited by William Keach (£11) - was probably written as a metrical exercise in 1802, though first published until 1834. Via a mutual friend, the lines later reached Sir Walter Scott, who included them in *Chapter VIII* of *Waverley*.



Centenary ceremony: Barry Amateur Radio Society members, in Victorian costume, re-enact Marconi's first radio transmission across water

Photograph: Rob Stratton

Marconi's wave of the future re-enacted

Richard Smith

Members of Barry Amateur Radio Society paid homage to Guglielmo Marconi on a beach in South Wales yesterday. They gathered at Lavernock Point to ensure the centenary of a landmark day in communications history was not lost in the ether.

From this spot Marconi beamed the first radio transmission across water, to Flat Holm Island, three and a half miles away in the Bristol Channel. Barry society members waited on the island yesterday for the signal, a letter V sent in Morse code, during a re-enactment of Marconi's breakthrough on 13 May 1897.

The society's chairman, Glyn Jones, said: "This is a little bit of history that has been totally

ignored because it happened in Wales... We have built a receiver exactly like Marconi's... His achievement was absolutely mind-boggling and it took three days before they got it right because they had no idea which frequency they were using. They couldn't wave flags or talk to the guys on Flat Holm Island, who were just sitting there fiddling down to the receiver. Then... Marconi moved his transmitter down to the beach from the cliff-top and added more wire to his aerial - quite by accident this lowered the frequency and, Eureka!, they connected.

"The people on Flat Holm were so cold and cheered off after three days sitting on the beach that one of their first messages back was 'Go to Hell'. But



Guglielmo Marconi: Breakthrough that has benefited all

four-fifths of our planet is water and Marconi allowed us to talk to the world - that's why I get so buzzed up... Without radio you couldn't use those yup-

py phones people now take for granted and the 730 people rescued when the *Titanic* sent out the first SOS message would simply have died."

In 1895 Marconi made the first radio transmission in his garden at the Villa Griffone, near Bologna. But an inability to send signals across water baffled scientists.

Finally, he went to Wales to try to solve the problem before Queen Victoria's chief engineer, Sir William Preece, who came from Caernarvon and was aware of the benefits radio communications would bring the Royal Navy.

For yesterday's re-enactment the Barry radio buffs used an aerial suspended from a helium-filled weather balloon flying 200 feet above Lavernock Point. Because the balloon was on the flight-path to Cardiff Airport and a nearby RAF base the Civil Aviation Authority was required to give special

permission and warn aircraft to stay away.

Marconi's assistant, George Kemp, attached the aerial on Flat Holm Island to a kite but the Barry group cheated slightly and fixed theirs to the lighthouse. Italy's vice-consul to Wales, Dominic Casetta, made the boat journey to Flat Holm to unveil a sculpture, shaped like a thunderbolt, to mark the centenary celebrations.

In the island's disused army barracks members of the Barry group were taking calls from radio hams from all over the globe. "It's the first time the GB1000 call sign has been used and there is one hell of a pile-up," said Bob Walsh, an Internet publisher. "It's taken years to plan this event and the mood is one of elation."

Lesbians are told to name fathers of 'pickle jar' babies

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

A lesbian couple's do-it-yourself artificial insemination has led to the Child Support Agency demanding the names of the two sperm donors who enabled the women to get pregnant.

Dawn and Lisa Whiting, who went through a gay "marriage" ceremony at a pub last October, have already sparked a furious outcry from pro-family campaigners who accuse them of acting against nature and their children's future welfare.

Lisa Whiting, 24, a former RAF cook, conceived her baby daughter Terri, aged five months, using a syringe to extract sperm stored in a pickle jar. Her partner Dawn, a 21-year-old amateur boxer, is now four months pregnant after using the same method.

Now the Child Support Agency wants to track down the two men who donated their sperm to make them pay maintenance because Lisa and Dawn are living on state benefits.

A CSA spokesman said: "Child support legislation requires any parent, with care of a child who is in receipt of certain benefits, such as income support, to cooperate with the agency in naming the absent parent." A parent who does not co-operate risks having their income support cut by 40 per cent.

The women would not have been targeted by the agency had their pregnancies resulted from sperm donation from a licensed fertility clinic. Dawn Whiting had been turned down for NHS treatment and the couple could not afford treatment at a private clinic.

The CSA said that tracking

an absent father did not begin until a child was born but Lisa Whiting will soon come under pressure to name her daughter's father. She is understood to be reluctant to do so because she does not want him to seek access on his release from prison, where he is serving a sentence for arson and burglary.

Anger at abortion of surrogate foetus

Couples from abroad will no longer be linked up with British surrogate mothers after a woman aborted a baby she was carrying for a Dutch couple, writes Glenda Cooper.

Kim Cotton, founder of Cots (Childlessness Overcome Through Surrogacy) confirmed yesterday that Karen Roche had terminated the pregnancy after agreeing to have a child for Sonja and Clemens Peters. Mrs Roche was reported to have pulled out of the deal with the Peters because she did not think they were committed to the pregnancy.

Mr and Mrs Peters had been trying to have a baby for 10 years and had looked to Britain to avoid strict laws in Holland. Mrs Roche had an abortion in April at a private clinic in

London after the Peters reportedly did not turn up to three meetings to discuss the child's future.

But the couple said Mrs Roche's mood changed after she became pregnant in February. Mrs Peters, 38, told a tabloid newspaper: "She would phone demanding more and more money, and when we asked why she was being so cold towards us, she would threaten us with an abortion."

Mrs Cotton, Britain's first known commercial surrogate, said both sides had failed to follow Cots' rules. She added that due to administrative and communication difficulties they would no longer help couples from abroad although they would see those already on their books.

A spokeswoman for Stone-wall, the gay rights group, said the organisation "supported absolutely" the right of the two women to live together as partners and found a family. But Dawn Whiting was being unfairly discriminated against simply because she was unable to afford private treatment at a licensed clinic. "We think it should be possible for a lesbian couple to contract to be the two parents, just like heterosexual parents with fertility problems."

The couple, who share a home in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, strongly defended their decision to opt for DIY insemination. "Our daughter Terri Leigh Ann is getting a good upbringing and we have nothing to be ashamed of," Dawn told their local paper, the *Evening Telegraph*. "It will be the same with the new baby. We have a loving and stable relationship in which to bring up children."

"We wanted a sister or brother for Terri Leigh Ann and we didn't want there to be a big age gap between them. We want Terri to go out with boys. If I have a son he'll go out with girls. We're not going to give them what you would call a gay upbringing."



Loving mother: Lisa Whiting with five-month-old daughter, Terri, conceived using donated sperm

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'Nothing personal: Howard's just not fit to lead the country'

Kim Sengupta

The gloves are off. Michael Howard's camp has set the rules, and if they want to fight dirty, Ann Widdecombe is determined that the former home secretary will live to regret it.

Mr Howard's camp, she believes, planted an untrue story in the *Daily Mail* that she had taken a stand against her erstwhile boss out of adoration for Derek Lewis, former director-general of the prison service, who had wooed her – "a convent-educated spinster" – with chocolates and flowers.

Yesterday, the former prisons minister cancelled a trip to Scotland where she was going to make a television programme about politicians and image, called Mr Lewis to apologise for the "disgusting lie" and declared on television that the story was a "demonstrable lie".

Ms Widdecombe then told a friend: "Is that the best they can do? It is a typically snide piece of untruth one associates with certain people."

"I was warned when I said I wanted to lay certain facts before the House I that would expect a certain amount of personal vilification. But this does not persuade me to back off. I am quite prepared to fight."

Ms Widdecombe, 49, Oxford-educated and a former London University financial administrator, converted to Catholicism three years ago. She says she passionately believes in "what is right", and studiously tried not to be personal.

She told friends: "I do not want him or his family to suffer. Why should there be anything personal between us? I was not sacked. I was not used as a scapegoat. In fact, Michael Howard and I agreed with most matters of policy."

"But I simply do not believe he is fit to lead the Conservative party or the country. I did not say anything before the election, but I was determined months ago that the truth shall be out."

"There is now, of course, a huge amount of disinforma-

tion. I read in the same paper which printed the story about Derek Lewis and myself that senior party figures have pleaded with me to drop the action. This is simply not true.

"I spoke to someone in the Whips Office and he simply asked me if I intended to go ahead, and I said 'yes'. That was the end of the matter."

"I had worked with four secretaries of state, Hunt, Newton, Lilley, and Portillo, before Michael Howard, and whatever their politics they had been scrupulously correct in their behaviour. I am glad Mr Howard was not the first one I worked under, otherwise I might have thought about leaving politics."

Ms Widdecombe has said that not only did Mr Lewis not instigate her actions against Mr Howard, he asked her to stop, because the price might be too high to pay.

She has told friends: "What I have done is my own decision. I am not doing it on behalf of anyone. I know I am up against the apparatus of the Howard camp, but I am very much on my own. I have got to be very careful, and have the material to prove everything I say. That is the correct and wise thing to do."

Ms Widdecombe has seen at first hand what happens when a politician goes into the bear-pit without full grasp of the facts. Jack Straw managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of certain victory in his debate with Mr Howard.

Ms Widdecombe told friends: "I was sitting there cringing. Of course I was loyal to my government. But Straw got simple details wrong, and that allowed Michael Howard to slip away. "He is a Houdini, he has escaped time and again, and who knows how this thing will turn out."

She will send Mr Howard a full text of her accusations before it is raised in public. She added that her next move would be later this week.

"Will this damage the future prospects of a ministerial career for me? Who knows. But I have no regrets."



Mission to explain: Ann Widdecombe puts her side of the story yesterday. "I do not want the former home secretary or his family to suffer." Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Blair assures Dunblane of ban on guns

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Tony Blair yesterday told Dunblane parents that he would ensure a ban on all handguns, even if the House of Lords defied convention and dug in against legislation implementing the manifesto pledge.

The Bill is to be one of 26 expected in today's Queen's Speech programme for the new session of Parliament.

Welcomed at No 10 by Cherie Booth, 14 parents of some of the Dunblane victims were given a guided tour by her before meeting Mr Blair. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, who briefed them on the four-clause Bill which will get a free vote of Labour MPs in the Commons.

The Bill will not only ban all handguns, including the .22 guns exempted by the Conservative government legislation, but will also revoke the possibility of owners holding their guns on club premises.

While the legislation will go through the Commons without difficulty, House of Lords "backwoodsmen" are expected

to put up stiff resistance, and could even defeat it in the Upper House.

The Prime Minister urged the parents' group to mobilise their campaign against the gun lobby, but he said that even if the Lords did stop the Bill in the forthcoming parliamentary session, he would bring it back again in the next session – allowing it to be forced through against the will of the Lords.

Certainly, if the hereditary peerage does block the Bill, it could be their last act of defiance – and would most certainly be used as ammunition by the Government to divest them of their power to sit and vote in a reformed Lords chamber.

Opening the debate on the Queen's Speech this afternoon, following the traditional State Opening of Parliament, Mr Blair will tell the Commons: "We are the people's government".

The themes of the legislative programme will be the one nation desire to bring the country together, after years of Tory division, and equipping it for the future, with two Education Bills to be at the heart of the speech.

The programme will be

heavy, comparing with only 15 Bills in John Major's 1992 Queen's Speech, and there will also be three White Papers, including one on freedom of information.

The Prime Minister will say today that the government mandate is clear: to modernise what is outdated, and to make fair what has become unjust, irrespective of dogma and doctrine, without fear or favour.

Other measures expected, apart from the core pledges on crime and disorder, health, education, and devolution, will include some social security reform, the reinstatement of an asylum appeals process, and action on restrictive practices.

■ The Prime Minister's office said that Boris Yeltsin, the President of Russia, had called Mr Blair for a 20-minute conversation about Anglo-Russian relations yesterday.

The two men have not met before, but they are expected to have further talks at a Nato-treaty signing ceremony in Paris, and again at this month's Group of Seven/Eight developed nations' meeting, in Denver, Colorado, at the end of this month.

McGuinness sets out stall as MP

Ian Burrell

The Sinn Féin strategist Martin McGuinness pledged yesterday to be an active Member of Parliament and warned Britain not to treat him and Gerry Adams as second-class MPs simply because they were not prepared to swear oaths of allegiance to the Queen.

He demanded that they be given full access to House of Commons facilities, including offices, the library and the postal service, in order that they could fulfil their responsibilities as constituency MPs.

Mr McGuinness said that he and Mr Adams, the Sinn Féin president – elected to represent Mid-Ulster and West Belfast respectively – would be pursuing a policy of "active abstentionism" at Westminster. "It means that short of taking our seats in the British House of Commons we will be fulfilling all the other functions and responsibilities that elected Members of Parliament have. We will provide

active representation for the people who elected us."

He added: "The first thing I expect is that I will not be treated by the new British government as a second-class MP. I have the right to expect that the British government will not hold against me my refusal to take an oath of allegiance."

Speaking at a press conference in London, Mr McGuinness said that many voters had asked him if he would actually take his seat in Parliament.

He had explained that he could not. "I am an Irish republican. I would not take an oath of allegiance to the English Queen. I don't wish her any ill-will at all, but I cannot take an oath of allegiance," he said.

Negotiations have begun with Commons officials for a Sinn Féin office to be set up at Westminster, but Mr McGuinness was scornful of the suggestion that it would heighten the security threat to known IRA targets like Baroness Thatcher and Andrew Hunter,

the chairman of the Conservative backbench committee on Northern Ireland.

"I don't want to kill anybody and I don't want to see anybody killed," said Mr McGuinness. "What we are hearing from the most negative elements of the British establishment, the Andrew Hunters of this world, is their unwillingness to recognise our electoral mandate."

Mr McGuinness said he was in London on constituency business, visiting Róisín McCloskey in Holloway prison, where she is awaiting extradition to Germany on charges relating to the mortar bombing of a British Army base. Ms McCloskey, 25, daughter of prominent republican Bernardette, is due to give birth a week today. Yesterday a stipendiary magistrate agreed that she was too ill to attend a court hearing on the extradition.

Mr McGuinness complained that his constituent was being held in "inhuman and degrading" and was locked up "for very long periods of time".

Reshuffle could put a little more order in the House

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Could this be the future shape of British politics? Labour has already changed the face of the House of Commons overnight once, and now it is under pressure to do the same again to make space for its 146 extra MPs.

Yesterday, the Liberal Democrats backed long-standing calls from some Labour members for the old adversarial seating plan to be swept away in favour of a circular or horseshoe-shaped chamber in the European mould.

The Government has already promised a special committee to look at reform of the House of Commons. It is expected to produce an interim report by July – just in time, the modernisers say, to move carpenters in during the summer recess.

For centuries, opposing MPs have sat facing each other, with two swords' lengths between them. Many of them believe that the yab-yoo scenes frequently seen at Prime Minister's ques-

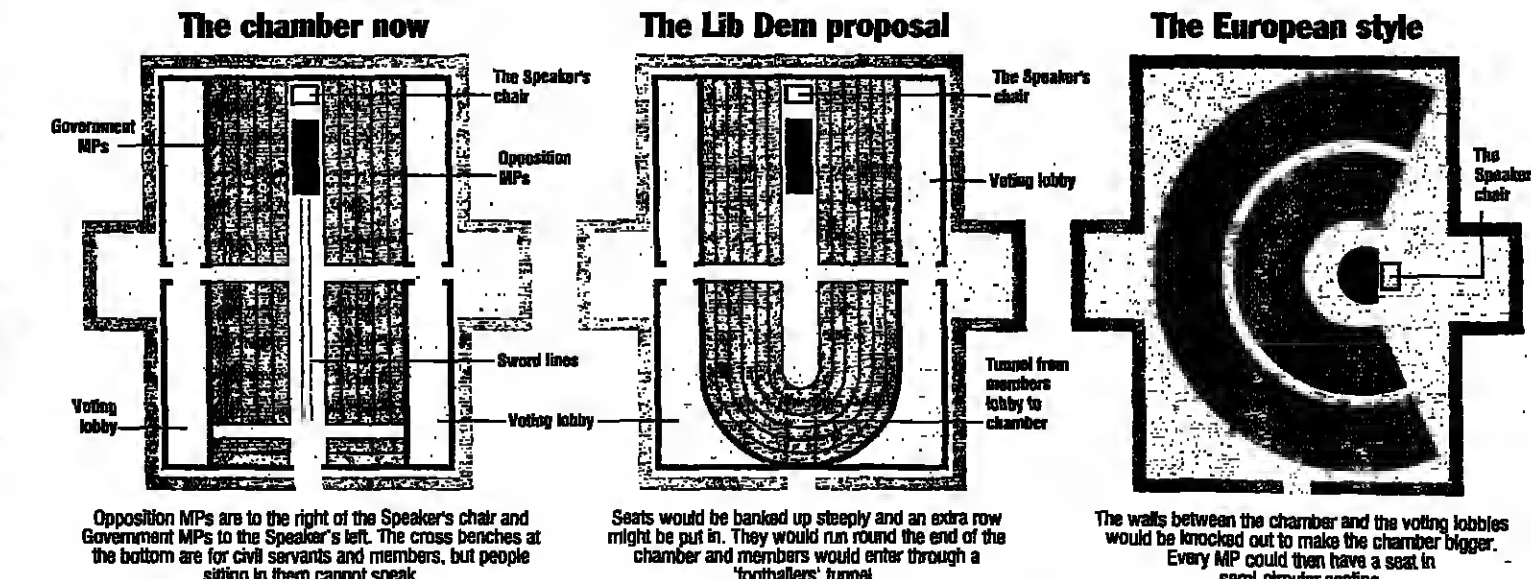
tions – which Tony Blair now plans to change – are due to the adversarial system symbolised by this antiquated seating plan.

But now, with 418 members on the government benches and just 241 on the opposition side, the case for change has become more pressing than ever.

Nick Harvey, the Liberal Democrats' campaigns and communications chairman and MP for Devon North, is among those now calling for change. "We have been stuck in a time-war for about 150 years and changing a few of these things is long overdue," he said.

"Even within the existing four walls, it would be possible to change the back of the chamber in such a way as to find more accommodation for Labour MPs and to do something about the adversarial atmosphere."

Mr Harvey believes the huge double doors through which MPs enter the chamber could be replaced by a bank of seats. Access would be through a sort of tunnel such as footballers use to enter grounds.



Labour's former constitutional spokesman, Graham Allen, now a government whip, published a booklet three years ago in which he said the walls of the debating chamber should be knocked out to create a much larger space.

The voting lobbies which run along each side of the chamber should be removed, he said, and a new semi-circular seating plan installed. This would provide a seat for every member and an opportunity for electronic voting.

"In 1547, Edward VI kindly gifted his chapel to the commons and we've been sitting in the choir stalls – eyeball to eyeball – ever since. Modern Britain requires something different," he wrote. "The carpenter and the electrician will

help to contribute to Britain's democratic revival."

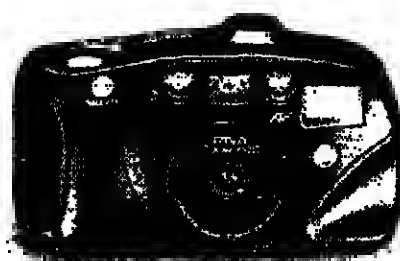
In fact, the existing chamber is less than 50 years old, having been bombed during the war and rebuilt in the same place.

While the Conservatives will fit comfortably on their benches and the Liberal Democrats and other opposition parties on the other half of their side of the chamber, Labour's MPs will be crammed into the aisles, crowded into the corners and queuing around the doors for a space. They will fill the cross benches usually reserved for civil servants and some will have to sit up in the gallery.

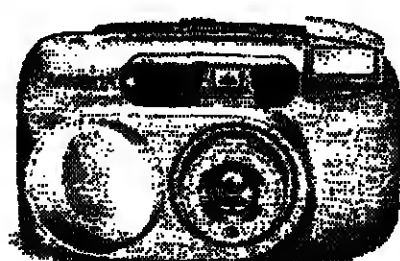
Then there is Martin Bell. Where should an independent MP, whose campaign was backed by one party now in government and another now in opposition, sit? For now, he will cram himself into a cross-bench from which he is not allowed to speak.

But although many MPs now believe change is necessary, the elder statesmen and women who run the House are unlikely to agree to the change. For the foreseeable future, Tony Blair's new model army will continue to cross swords with the opposition in the old-fashioned way.

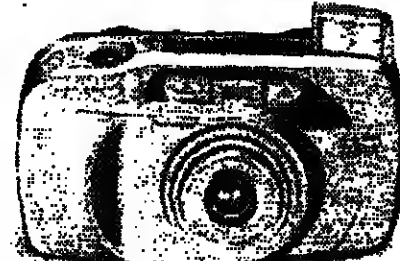
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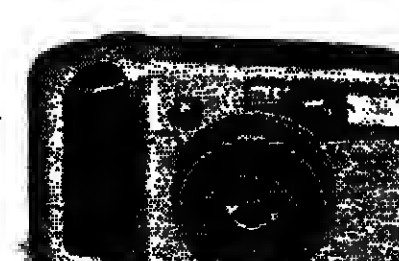
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Many forced to hide mental illness at work

Glenda Cooper
Social Affairs Correspondent

More than 30,000 people with long-term mental-health problems may be concealing their psychiatric history from employers and colleagues for fear of discrimination or losing their jobs.

People with a mental illness are less likely to have a job than if they are blind, deaf, have breathing difficulties or a learning disability. Often employers do not know how to deal with mental-health problems in the workplace, leaving employees prey to stigma, according to Mind, which yesterday hosted a conference in London on employment and mental health.

Only one in five people with a long-term mental-health problem, which can include phobias, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia, are economically active, compared to 83 per cent of the population at

large. Around 58,000 such people are employed in total.

Those with a mental problem fare worse than those with physical disability when it comes to unemployment. Of those available for work, nearly four out of 10 were unemployed, compared to 20 per cent of those with a visual impairment, 15 per cent with a hearing impairment or 26 per cent with chest or breathing problems.

An earlier survey for Mind

which questioned 800 people with mental-health problems found 34 per cent said they had to resign or were dismissed and more than half had concealed their psychiatric history. A man diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder said: "On two occasions I lied when I applied for jobs. On both these occasions I said that my two-and-a-half-year absence from employment was due to a term spent in prison. I was accepted

for the first and shortlisted for the second. Whenever I have been truthful about my psychiatric past I have never been accepted for a job."

Liz Sayce, Mind's policy director said: "Employers have begun to realise that someone who is blind can be an excellent employee and do not want to waste their potential talent. There is nothing like this among people with a mental-health problem. There are still stereotypical fears where we write people off as a generalisation instead of seeing them as an individual on their own merits."

From work done in the US, employers' most common fears are that those with a mental illness would be unreliable. Ms Sayce added: "The evidence is that those who are employed do not have any worse fitness records... The long-term disabled... often tend to be more punctual and do not take the odd days off that others might."

I didn't know how to get help

Before his breakdown, Ian Payne (right) felt that as a nurse he could not turn to anyone at work for help over the stress he was feeling. "The image of nurses is that they cope... I didn't know how to get help." In the end, he "exploded" and walked off the ward, resigning. After setting up a lobby group with another nurse to highlight the stress nurses are under, he also started training to be a psychiatric nurse, and says he is now always open about his psychiatric history. "My... work at the hospital is now just a memory. I feel I have a new life now."



Endurance test: Mike Grindley at his campaign headquarters in Cheltenham

Photograph: David Rose

Sweet revenge for man who defied union ban at GCHQ

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

After 13 years, Mike Grindley, trade unionist, obsessive and master of Mandarin Chinese, is about to thwart the wishes of the mighty National Security Agency of America - and the even mightier Baroness Thatcher.

Much to the irritation of the intelligence community across the Atlantic and the erstwhile prime minister, the new Labour government is to offer Mr Grindley and his friends re-employment at the GCHQ intelligence network based in Cheltenham.

Rohin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, is expected to make the announcement tomorrow as part of the debate on the Queen's Speech.

It has taken Mr Grindley hundreds of speeches, scores of visits to union conferences, years of stubbornness and, more importantly, the election of a Labour government to achieve his goal. "We are elated," said Mr Grindley, "people in GCHQ are already wearing union badges."

"It's been a mixture of tenacity, tiredness, excitement and endurance. We always knew in our heart of hearts that we would win our rights back, but if we had been told it would take 13 years, the prospect would have been daunting indeed."

Mr Grindley, along with 13 colleagues, was dismissed on the order of the Thatcher government after refusing to give up union membership in return for £1,000.

The ban on trade unionism at the centre, which monitors radio communications around the world as a part of an Anglo-

American intelligence agreement, followed the expression of concern by US spymasters.

A series of strikes in Whitehall in 1981 over pay led to industrial action at GCHQ and the US security agency used its diplomatic muscle to secure the union ban.

According to some sources, the American agency has now bowed to the inevitable reinstatement of union recognition, but has registered its keenness to see a prohibition on stoppages.

Mr Grindley insists that essential services have always been maintained during industrial action - a contention supported by Sir John Nott, the then secretary of state for defence, who said the industrial action had "not in any way affected operational capability".

About 10 of the "refuseniks" are expected to refuse re-employment, some because of retirement, others because they have embarked on other careers.

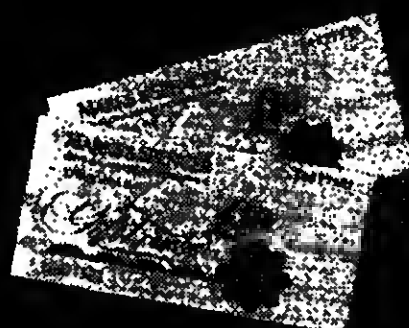
While senior management at the complex and their US counterparts are seeking a "no-strike" deal, a less restrictive formula is likely to be agreed in negotiations which will follow Mr Cook's announcement. Ironically the revised GCHQ Staff Federation - the organisation set up in the absence of orthodox unions - is likely to be subsumed into the PTC civil service union.

Alas for Mr Grindley, the election of a Labour government has come a little late. For him there will only be a symbolic return to work.

A short walk into the GCHQ site within the next few weeks will be followed by a long stroll into retirement.

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international

Allies risk US ire over Tehran oil deal

Phil Reeves
Baku, Azerbaijan

Western firms in Azerbaijan consider plan to 'swap' Caspian Sea and Iran Gulf crude

A Western-dominated group of oil companies is looking at the possibility of sending oil from the Caspian Sea to Iran. The controversial move threatens to intensify the dispute between Britain, its European partners, and Washington over US sanctions against foreign firms who invest in Iran's energy industries.

The sensitive plan is being explored in Azerbaijan by oil companies which are developing the ex-Soviet republic's Caspian riches and have begun seeking outlets to the international marketplace in a region criss-crossed by geopolitical rivalries. The idea involves an "oil swap":

Iran would take delivery of up to 250,000 barrels a day of Caspian crude at a refinery in Tabriz, north-west Iran, and release oil of equal value from its south-western oil fields for shipment from the Persian Gulf to the Far East.

This arrangement is believed to benefit the Iranians, as deliveries from the Caspian would replace oil they pipe up from the south over hundreds of miles of deserts to supply northern Iran.

It is also offers potential advantages to the oil companies and the Azerbaijan government as an economic means of getting their oil to

a port, and an alternative route to the marketplace in a volatile environment where pipelines can fall victim to politics and violence.

Those favouring the idea say there are also political arguments in its support. It would fit into an elaborate strategy, masterminded by Azerbaijan's 73-year-old president, Haidar Aliyev, of balancing conflicting international interests – notably the US, Turkey, Iran and Russia – by cutting them into the looming oil bonanza.

A swap would increase Iran's share of the spoils from the Caspian, whose total reserves are reckoned to

be 50-70 billion barrels – at least twice those of the North Sea. At present, Iran has a small stake in only one of five international oil consortia exploring and drilling for Azeri oil. By contrast, the Americans have a hefty 40 per cent and 55 per cent holding in two, and 30 per cent of a third.

The logic is straightforward: increase Tehran's involvement, and it has less to gain by trouble-making – for instance, by trying to increase its influence over its Azerbaijani neighbours by fostering the growth of Islamic fundamentalism.

"The rationale is that if you have balance in the Caspian, then the

Western interests are even more secure," said one Western analyst. "That policy would be well-served by involving Iran in a realistic way." It also gives outsiders control, albeit it temporary, over a major oil supply to Iran's most populated region.

"The beauty of an oil swap is that you both have your hands on each other's throats," the analyst observed. If it goes ahead, the Iranian "swap" would be one of several paths through which oil would eventually get out of Azerbaijan. Chief among these will be a main export pipeline, the route of which is causing intense manoeuvring, particularly in Washington, Ankara

and Moscow. Three principal options – one via Russia, another via Georgia and a third through Georgia and Turkey – have been identified as viable by the Azerbaijan International Operating Company (AIOC), the leading consortium in Baku, which includes BP, Exxon, Amoco, Unocal and Russia's Lukoil. Next month, it will present a report outlining them to the Azerbaijan government, beginning a period in which funding, licences, and assessments will be sought before a decision in 18 months to two years.

Such is the sensitivity surrounding a possible oil swap that few in Baku are willing to discuss it openly. A

spokesman for the US embassy said: "There have been discussions, but it has generally been discounted because it doesn't fit into our policy."

That policy is enshrined in the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, which – to the fury of London and Brussels – was signed into law last August by President Bill Clinton to discourage investment in countries which Washington considers to be sponsors of international terrorism.

It is too soon to be clear whether an oil swap would violate the act, which imposes penalties on companies that invest more than \$40m in the Iranian oil and gas industries in any 12-month period. But sources in Baku suggest that it will: "There is one problem – the Americans," said one.

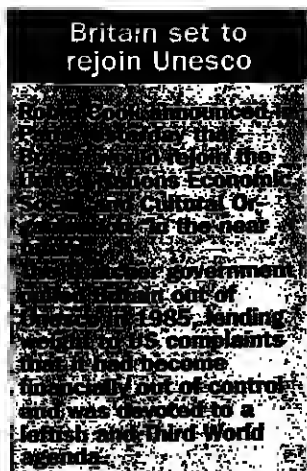
Cook says EU may have a defence role

John Lichfield
Paris

The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, made a small but atmospherically significant move yesterday towards accepting a limited role for the European Union in defence matters.

He said the new government would stoutly resist pressure from France, Germany and others to bring defence policy into the legal and constitutional framework of the EU. He would, however, accept new language in the EU treaties, setting out the principles for European involvement in humanitarian missions, peace-keeping and even peace-making. Mr Cook was speaking during and after his first formal appearance on the European political stage, at a meeting in Paris of foreign and defence ministers of the Western European Union.

The WEU, an insubstantial organisation for most of its half-century life, has developed recently as a largely untested European defence arm within Nato. A group of European countries wish it to be fully absorbed into the EU as part of constitutional changes to be finalised in Amsterdam next month. Yesterday Mr Cook said the Government, like its predecessor, would block such



Britain set to rejoin Unesco

a move, which might imply majority voting on defence matters and the development of a fully fledged EU defence policy.

Britain remained committed to Nato as the core of a British and European defence policy, in which decisions were taken by sovereign governments by consensus.

"Security and defence are matters which intimately touch on the identity of nation-states. We don't believe any nation state would be willingly outvoted on a matter which touches on its defence."

But the new government would be willing to consider ways of strengthening WEU-EU links, Mr Cook said. He

could accept the writing into the new EU treaty, due to emerge from the Amsterdam summit, of the humanitarian, rescue, peace-making and peace-keeping tasks allotted to the WEU at Petersberg, near Bonn, in 1992.

This is further than the previous government was prepared to go but is a logical extension of policy pursued by Britain and other governments of making the WEU a kind of informal EU-Nato hybrid. The implications are difficult to define, since all 10 WEU states are also EU members.

It would allow EU countries, as part of their common foreign-policy discussions, to consider and decide on humanitarian and peace-keeping tasks which would be carried out by the same countries in their guise as WEU members.

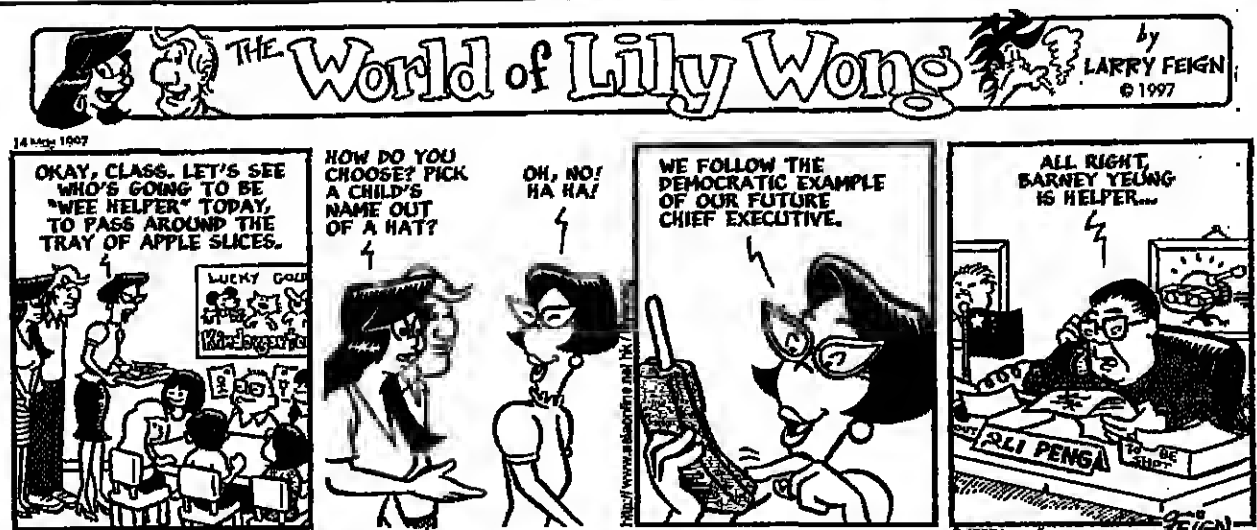
Constitutionally, it amounts to only a small shift.

Decisions would still have to be taken by consensus, not by majority vote. But Mr Cook's comments were taken by the Dutch, Germans and others as a welcome first British step towards a clearer definition of a European defence identity.

It might provide the basis for a compromise on security and defence issues in Amsterdam which would allow progress on other treaty changes.



New boy: Robin Cook (centre rear) trying to be included in a photograph of European foreign and defence ministers, who were grouped for the shot in order of seniority. Photograph: Reuters



Basques denied 'Guernica'

Elizabeth Nash
Madrid

Madrid's Reina Sofia museum yesterday refused permission for the jewel of its collection, *Guernica*, Picasso's masterpiece on the horrors of war, to travel to the Basque city of Bilbao, saying it was "too fragile to move either by air or by road".

Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum, which opens on 3 October, had hoped to put the work at the heart of its inaugural exhibition. The request to borrow the painting was political, backed by the Basque regional government, eager to have the work exhibited on Basque soil for the first time. Basque politicians, always ready to accuse Madrid of turning a deaf ear to the region's demands, are bound to be furious.

Guernica commemorates the Nazis' bombing in 1937 of the Basques' spiritual home, when hundreds of civilians died in Europe's first blitz. Picasso, an opponent of Franco's forces in the Civil War, said the painting should not be shown in Spain until democracy was restored. It wandered through Europe and the US for decades before being brought to Spain in 1981.

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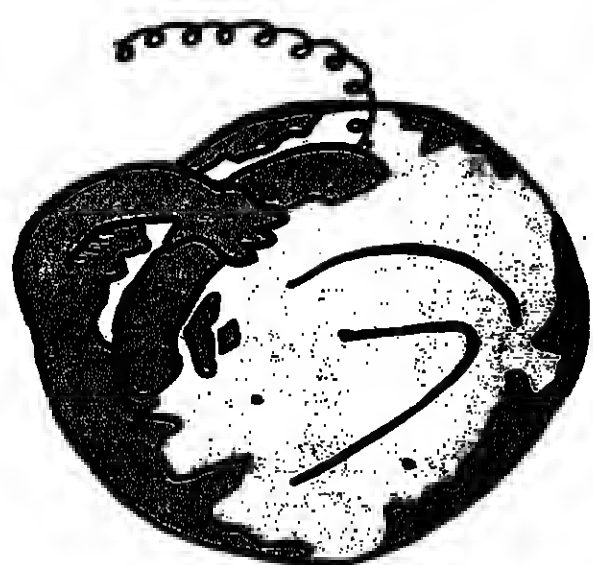
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international

Peking rocked by bomb attack

Teresa Poole
Peking

A home-made bomb exploded yesterday in a central Peking park next to China's leadership compound, killing one person. There were also reports of an explosion on a bus in southern China, which was said to have killed five.

Police refused to give any details of the explosion in Peking, which only added to speculation that the cause of the blast could be anything from Uighur Mus-

lim separatists, disgruntled sacked state enterprise workers, to a very public suicide.

The explosion happened at about 5pm inside Zhongshan Park, which flanks the Forbidden City where China's emperors once resided. Across the street is Zhongnanhai, where the country's present-day rulers live and work behind high walls. If it was a suicide, the choice of such a spot would suggest political overtones to the death.

Residents living near Zhongshan Park's west gate confirmed

hearing a loud noise at around 5pm. There was one report that a bomb had been placed underneath a park bench. The park gates were closed early, and a police car remained at the entrance throughout the evening. "We are investigating," was all an official at the police station inside the park would say.

China's leaders are especially sensitive to any such events in the run-up to the Hong Kong handover.

It is just over two months since a home-made bomb ex-

ploded on a crowded Peking bus, injuring several people and reportedly killing at least two. No-one has yet been arrested for that blast, despite police efforts. It later emerged that there had been two other bombs around that time in Peking, which did not cause serious injuries.

The extreme secrecy of the Chinese authorities, and the lack of any free media, means that information about all these events is scarce. In March, it was assumed that the blasts were

probably the work of Muslim separatists from the far western Xinjiang province, because in February three bus bombs in the provincial capital of Urumqi had killed nine people.

But rumours started spreading that at least two of those Peking bombs were the work of angry state enterprise workers who had been laid off from their jobs. Unemployment is soaring in China because over-manned, loss-making state factories are shedding large numbers of workers as they try to restruct-

ure to meet the rigours of a market economy. A senior state planner, Wang Donglin, last week admitted that 54 million state sector employees – a third of the payroll – were probably surplus to requirements.

The Chinese government's obsession with social stability means that it is unlikely to tell the truth about yesterday's bomb. For instance, the police insisted that no-one died in the 7 March bus bomb, but there were independent sources which said there were deaths.

Yesterday, there were reports of two other explosions in China. A blast, presumed to be an accident, injured more than 20 people in a printing factory in the southern city of Zhongshan (coincidentally the same name as the Peking park).

Then a bus explosion near Shunde city, Guangdong province, killed five people. Police said that the explosion was caused by a young couple who died in the blast, although the circumstances were not explained.

Kicking up a stink in battle for Italian idyll

Andrew Gumbel
Orvieto

Orvieto is one of the prettiest hill towns in Italy, a celebrated wine-making centre with a well-preserved medieval centre and a stupendously beautiful cathedral perched on an outcrop of volcanic tufa.

What is the first thing you'd do if you had the run of a place like that? How about sucking a 150ft rubbish incinerator right beneath its imposing walls and encouraging every juggernaut in Umbria, plus a few from the neighbouring regions of Tuscany and Lazio, to rumble in day and night to deliver heavy-duty garbage?

The proposal, incredibly, is not a joke but is being put forward with great vigour, not to mention a certain degree of subtlety, by Orvieto's mayor, Stefano Cimicchi.

Without telling anyone in Orvieto itself, Mr Cimicchi was last month on the verge of signing a contract with a company called Sao to build the incinerator – in an inhabited area next to a river less than two miles from the city walls. He had even lined up a deal with the state electricity company, Enel, to buy the rather negligible quantity of energy that the incinerator was expected to produce.

But then, just a couple of weeks ago, Mr Cimicchi was found out. A chance discovery by the local chapter of the World Wide Fund for Nature led to a furious public meeting at which insults were hurled in all directions. A group of local celebrities – writers, politicians, architects and environmentalists, most of whom live in Rome, and come up to Orvieto for the weekend – stopped little shots of physical force to prevent Mr Cimicchi from signing his contracts.

The mayor, in turn, described them dismissively as spoiled rich kids and "intellectual pains in the backside", urging them to dedicate themselves to more worthwhile causes and vowing to press ahead with the project in the interests of Orvieto's economy.

The battle is showing few signs of abating. Mr Cimicchi has referred the issue to the Umbrian regional government to buy time. The protesters, meanwhile, have set up a fighting fund to hire lawyers and independent technical experts. One senses a distinct class problem between the celebrities, who are rich, educated and well-spoken, and Mr Cimicchi, the country boy, whose manner makes up in directness what he lacks in subtlety or wit.

One protester described him as "a cross between Saddam Hussein and Steve Martin". The Iraqi reference is not accidental, since one of Mr Cimicchi's more curious recent acts has been to twin Orvieto with Baghdad – the idea being to bring a prestigious exhibition of Iraqi art works to the green heart of Italy, even if it does mean kowtowing to one of the world's more unpleasant dictators.

What is the real story behind the craziness? The rumours suggest anything from dirty deals within Mr Cimicchi's party, the left-wing PDS (which many of the protesters support, too), to the involvement of the Mafia, whose interest in the toxic waste business is well documented all over Italy. For example in Fabriano, just a few miles up the road from Orvieto, a large consignment of toxic waste was recently discovered in the foundations of a brand-new agricultural exhibition centre.

Why build an incinerator at all? A company called Prometeus has developed a system to recycle heavy waste and turn the rest into compost. But nobody in Umbria itself seems interested.

Mobutu call to arms as rebels near Kinshasa

Mary Braid
Kinshasa

Kinshasa was flooded with leaflets yesterday promising that Laurent Kabila's advancing rebels, apparently just 100 kilometres from the Zairean capital, would storm the city by the weekend. Acknowledging that the rebels are closer than ever, the government declared a curfew and called on civilians to take up arms.

There is uncertainty about how far President Mobutu Sese Seko can count on his own forces to defend him against the approaching rebels. Such is his paranoia about treachery in the forces that it is said he has installed 250 soldiers from Chad at his official city residence, Camp Tshashi.

A week ago, another wave of leaflets appeared in Kinshasa, urging government soldiers to support the pro-rebel elements in their ranks and to make white staffs and flags to show support when the rebels hit the capital.

"We are taking the leaflets seriously," said one middle-ranking officer, who prefers to remain anonymous. "Less than a third still support Mobutu. Most of us already have the scarves and flags ready." Are they not afraid their commanding officers will find them? "Why should we be?" he says. "They have already made their own."

Efforts to negotiate a soft landing for Zaire continue.

South African deputy president Thabo Mbeki yesterday postponed last-minute visits to President Mobutu in Kinshasa and Mr Kabila, at his headquarters in Lubumbashi. The second round of peace talks is scheduled to begin today on the *Outeniqua*, a South African supply ship. But just 24 hours from the summit, negotiators admitted substantial differences between the rebel and the dictator remained.

However upbeat their public statements, Mr Mbeki and President Nelson Mandela are reluctant to board the ship without an agreement, in principle, on a transfer of power. Ten days ago, a Herculean effort was required just to get both President Mobutu and Mr Kabila on ship at the same time.

When – or if – talks get under way today, Kinshasa will be on strike. Leading opposition figure, Etienne Tshisekedi, oddly quiet during the rebels' advance, has called a *ville morte* (dead town) day, to protest about proposals that would allow President Mobutu to transfer power, transitionally, to Roman Catholic Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo.

Yesterday's propaganda leaflets instructed people to stay at home until the weekend, by which time the capital would be in rebel hands through brute force rather than diplomacy.

In his huge bare office in Zaire's deserted transitional parliament, Valentin Mubake,



Homeward bound: Young Hutus waiting to be evacuated by the UN from Biaro refugee camp, in Zaire, for repatriation to Rwanda

Photograph: AP

opposition leader and parliamentary spokesman, shows considerable admiration for Mr Kabila. Mr Mubake, a man dedicated to peaceful change, has found passivism has its limits. Zaire's democratic transition, scheduled to take two years, has now stretched to seven and at every turn reformers have been thwarted by President Mobutu.

"We in the opposition have created a climate for change," said Mr Mubake. "But without Kabila's use of force, Mobutu would remain in power and his people would be there for ever." The international community, he argues, must do nothing at this crucial stage to slow Mr Kabila's arrival.

"Monsengwo is unacceptable as a transitional figure and there are no other suitable candidates," says Mr Mubake, one of the new breed of politicians to emerge in Zaire since reforms started. He was part of an opposition walk-out at the weekend when, in a typical piece of Zairean political pantomime, the majority pro-Mobutists engineered Archbishop Monsengwo's election as Parliamentary Chairman.

"Mobutu is not just a man," said Mr Mubake. "After 32 years he is a system which has poisoned every area and level of

national life. Even those in religious robes ... cannot be taken at face value. Monsengwo is Mobutu's man and this transitional plan is Mobutu's."

The notion that a transitional power figure would save President Mobutu's dignity and smooth a non-violent transfer is scorned by Mr Mubake.

"What face does he have left to lose? He is simply buying time." Earlier this week, a rebel

spokesman claimed foreign countries were trying to prevent a necessary revolution. Mr Mubake agrees, claiming any transitional arrangement will shield President Mobutu and thousands of corrupt cronies who have grown obscenely rich in poverty-ridden Zaire. If Zaire is to have a chance, they must be routed, Mr Mubake believes.

rebel assurances that they will work with the opposition.

prosecuted in Britain, but they do have fond memories of one famous case. In 1987, they turned the tables, suing the Metropolitan Police for wrongful arrest.

They won that battle, but subsequent legal challenges, reaching all the way to the Lords, have come to grief. Their last hope now rests with the European Court of Human Rights, which is due to rule on the admissibility of their case against the British government in the near future.

After the limited engagement in Düsseldorf, they will soon be back in their home town, playing their jazz on the run. "I hope that one day we'll have the same right in London as we have here," says Mike. "But I can't see it."



Blown in the wind: Travellers on a Düsseldorf tram enjoying Extremely Frank Jeremy playing guitar with Bongo Mike after their successful struggle with German bureaucracy

Photograph: Imre Karacs

Busking duo strike high note as Germans make them legit

Imre Karacs
Düsseldorf

They have been hauled off the London Underground, driven out of Brussels, chased away by the carabinieri from the terrace of Milan's La Scala, and pursued by mounted police in Budapest. For 15 years, Bongo Mike and Extremely Frank Jeremy have had to duck the law wherever they went. Yesterday, their journey came to an end.

On the 11 o'clock train heading for Ertkrath, a suburb of Düsseldorf, the two London artists made history. The songs were the same as before, but the mood had changed.

The ticket collector smiled at them, and no security guard intervened. For the first time in

their lives, Mike and Jeremy were legit.

As of yesterday, they are authorised by German railways to busk on trains in the Düsseldorf area outside rush hours for two weeks. According to the company's stamped letter, they are to apply their art "sparingly" and provide a detailed travel plan in advance. They also had to take out costly personal liability insurance, in case someone should trip over Mike's fold-up chair.

The procedure may seem cumbersome, but for Mike and Jeremy dealing with German bureaucracy has been a liberating experience. "This town used to be completely hit-and-run," says the man on the bongos. "I never thought we'd get a licence here."

It took their German lawyer a year to negotiate the conditions with the railway company. They had to fill in a questionnaire asking for precise details of their entertainment, and an equally precise document came back in the post, authorising the

"artistic performance" on a "trial basis".

Being legal is important to Mike and Jeremy, self-proclaimed "situation artists" with a mission to liberate their trade. "If you can get it legal and licensed, then you get good

artists," Mike says. "We are not begging with an instrument: we are performing art."

The distinction between busking and begging seems to be lost on city authorities all over Europe.

Apart from Skopje, the

Macedonian capital – where Mike and Jeremy for some reason enjoy celebrity status – every transport policeman and security guard on the continent is out to get them.

They have lost count of how many times they have been

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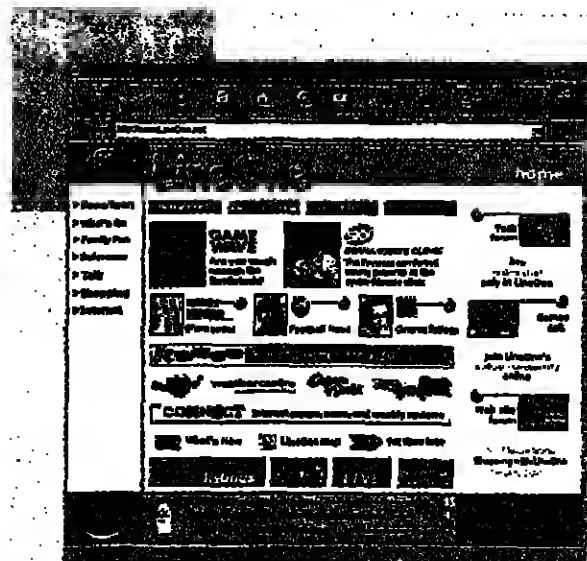
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Complaints lost in a legal tangle

مكتبة من الامارات

Schools must expect exceptional change

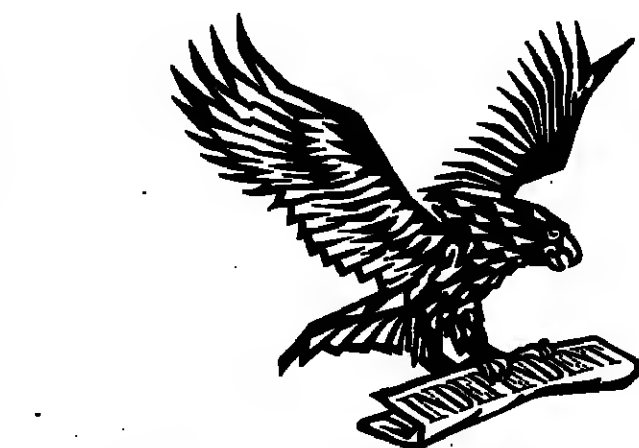
David Blunkett's attempt to raise the sights for primary school attainment could be the best sign yet we have had from this new government that it intends to break free from hand-wringing helplessness, and take the problem of embedded educational under-achievement head on. The vaunted Butler reforms were a set of compromises jerry-built on religious jealousies, professional conservatism and parochialism. A generation on, Jim Callaghan went to Nuffield College and identified system failure – then Shirley Williams vacillated. Among her successors, Sir Keith Joseph agonised and Kenneth Clarke blustered. Now we need utter clarity of direction – and clear targets are the first big step down that road.

The Conservatives did make important and valuable changes in school organisation, curriculum and (crucially) in the introduction of tests to state schools. Mr Blunkett should acknowledge he is building now on their foundations. But the Tories never quite produced a programme for change in the classroom, in the everyday lives of children. Mr Blunkett has now made a specific pledge around which all the other elements in the education package can be organised: within five years, hundreds of thousands of under-achieving boys and girls ought to be writing, reading, calculating better. Their schools should be giving them a

precious thing – the capacity to deal with the fast-changing world in which they will have to study, find work and make their lives. If that promise is realised, Mr Blunkett will deserve accolades. If it is not, he will have failed.

Merely to lodge quantitative targets in the minds of parents, governors, teachers and the public at large is useful. In his task forces, the Secretary of State has thinkers at his elbow to advise on changes in teaching practice, to seed the intellectual climate with ideas about what works in other cultures. But, like his impotent predecessors, Mr Blunkett has few direct means of securing changes in practice in classrooms. English state education is a dis-articulated system, its finance a jungle, its industrial relations primitive, and its governance – what was that phrase the former Prime Minister conjured up in the heat of the election campaign? – a pig's breakfast.

Mr Blunkett will have, at least at first, to do what he can with the machinery as it stands. If local education authorities cannot or will not start the intensive training, retraining, and attitudinal change that his scheme demands, direct rule is the only option. Lately, it has sometimes seemed as if social policy ministers and their shadows have been watching too much Tarantino; their talk has been of nothing but hit squads. But if governors or heads will not climb on board, direct action will be the only way



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of extending change into the schools themselves.

Hit squads can only be a palliative. Teachers need to be re-motivated and governors energised for the long haul. Bad practices and bad teachers may have to be bought out. Even if Mr Blunkett finds the money at the centre, he is going to have to create a way of ensuring it is delivered at the chalkface, and that must surely mean abandoning the pretence that money for schools can be deposited in a general grant for councils in the hope that it will come out intact at the other end. Labour has come to power with some mighty

ambiguous thoughts about its devotion to the autonomy of local authorities. For all the protestations of good faith from the local government side, the brutal truth is that local administration has too often failed schools.

The nub of Labour's ambition is to reach into the bad schools, into the problem classes, to the kids at the back who read and spell badly and can't snap back the answer to 9x9. That will require a huge mobilisation of effort, within schools, within local authority areas. A hard question is whether it will, necessarily, involve a degree of neglect of the kids at the front of the

class, those in the good schools, those in the high-achieving classes – the kids with middle-class parents who want them to surpass the national curriculum standard. Whole-class teaching works in Taiwan, but brighter children and their parents are prepared, there, to wait patiently while the slower children are brought up to the mark of the quickest. A more British solution might be the extension of setting in primary schools. But such a solution cannot be stipulated at the centre; too much depends on teachers' capacities, school ecology, parents' wishes.

Those parents must not be alienated. The Independent Schools Information Service says entry to private schooling is rising. That may simply reflect rising prosperity and the wish of parents of middle-ability children to secure for them a maximal education return – the best exam results. But the buoyancy of private schools should not be an occasion for gnashing egalitarian teeth. The finding, in a poll, that four-fifths of Labour MPs want to abolish private schools is disquieting. That is partly for the obvious reason that the wish conflicts with their party's intention to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights: you cannot have personal liberty and abolish the right to private schooling at the same time. But the real point is that it is an illusory answer. Mr Blunkett needs to tell his colleagues that the fate of private schools is a dis-

traction. Their attractiveness is, in large measure, a function of the unreliability of state schools. The closer primary schools come to Mr Blunkett's targets, the more parents will cleave to them. And one big way to achieve that is to ensure that aspiring parents find that their children are led to achieve, not just what is adequate, but what is exceptional, in state schools just as they are in the private sector. It is possible. All that holds them back is the culture that too eagerly accepts the status quo.

The passing of 'Mastermind'

For a country that is supposed to despise people who are too bright, it is remarkable how much genuine affection surrounds clever-dick radio and television shows. The death of *Mastermind* feels like a national loss and will sadden even those who would answer "Pass" if asked how many "s"s there are in its quizmaster's name. Perhaps the key to its success has been the esoteric knowledge displayed by contestants. Perhaps it was the stark isolation of that chair. Perhaps it was the sheer amateurism of a show that offered no prize money and presented contestants who regularly vied for the prize of greyest man or woman in the country.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Case against freeing the Bank

Sir: Goldman Sachs economist Gavin Davies ("Critics of Bank independence miss the point", 12 May) fails to prove that there is a causal relationship between central bank independence and low inflation. The Treasury Select Committee in its 1993 report said "this is no conclusive statistical evidence of a causal relationship between the status of the central bank and inflation performance."

M Davies and his friends argue that monetary policy is too important to be left to mere politicians. Then we might as well sub-contract the running of the entire economy to Goldman Sachs.

The case against independence for the Bank was put to the Treasury Committee by Sir Bryan Hopkins and Sir Douglas Wace. "The officials of the Bank of England are able and conscientious men who are not unaware of economic, social and political stresses in the community. Entrusted with this essentially political responsibility, they would discharge it with intelligence and a strong sense of duty: they would do the best with it. But it remains that it is inherently wrong to give such a responsibility to central bankers. Quite simply, it is not their job: it is the proper responsibility of the elected representatives of the democracy and should stay with them."

DANE ABBOTT MP
(Jackdaw North and Stoke Newington, Lab)
House of Commons
London SW1

Sir: It is Gavin Davies who has raised the point. The fact that central bank independence is associated with lower inflation tells us nothing. Not all central banks are the same; not all economies – or banking systems – are the same.

It is non-metropolitan Britain's misfortune to have a financial sector which is chiefly oriented overseas (unlike Germany's), which is not integrated with industrial domestic capital (unlike Germany's), and whose interests are antithetical to the domestic economy (unlike Germany's).

Mr Davies works for an American bank situated "offshore" in the City of London. He can thus plausibly write of the domestic manufacturing sector as "the one quarter of the economy which is directly affected by the exchange rate" and whose interests "cannot take precedence over the maintenance of the inflation target". But that one quarter earns more than 60 per cent of UK foreign exchange; and on its health rests the well-being of a considerable chunk of other, service sectors of the economy.

It is a sacrifice British manufacturing in the interests of an inflation target – which is what Mr Davies is advocating – is a recipe for disaster for non-metropolitan Britain.
ROBIN RAMSAY
Hull

Complaints lost in a legal tangle

Sir: Shortly before the prorogation of Parliament an early day motion had already attracted the signatures of some 18 MPs, with more promised. It called for an end to the self-regulation by the Law Society of complaints against solicitors and



the establishment in its place of a genuinely independent body.

Of some 20,000 formal complaints made each year only around 250, or 1.25 per cent, are upheld and complainants, among whom I number myself – who have the stamina left after inordinate delays and other obstacles, seemingly designed to wear them down – who then turn for justice to the "independent" Appeals Committee, fare little better. Those who still persist may then refer to the Legal Services Ombudsman, but apart from the limitations of his powers, the experience of many who have made submissions to him does not inspire confidence in his real independence from the decision-making bodies of the Law Society.

Since the Ombudsman is appointed by the Lord Chancellor and paid from public funds, there ought to be some public accountability for his decisions, but the branch of the Lord Chancellor's Department responsible for liaison with the professional regulatory bodies refuses to intervene.

Now that there has been a change of administration in Whitehall, with a hopefully refreshing end to the "never admit to a mistake let alone say sorry" culture which has permeated public life over these past 18 years, it is to be hoped that the opportunity will be provided for a debate on a promised fresh early day motion for the new parliament and that this will have the backing of the Government and its newly appointed Lord Chancellor. Certainly such support will find a sympathetic echo among the tens of thousands of citizens whose lives in varying degrees have been marred by the sense of injustice

and frustration with which they are left after having run in vain the gamut of the present legal complaints machinery.

Fellow victims of the present system are urged to lobby their MPs to support the new early day motion.
CAROL DAVIES
Llandysul,
Pwys

Adieu Major, we'll miss you

Sir: Although your article "It's goodbye to Mr In-Between" (3 May) acknowledged John Major's "achievements", calling him "Mr In-Between" as he left office was cruel and unfair.

Certainly, John Major is by no means a charismatic figure, nor the kind of leader whose natural authority could instantly hush a rebellious backbencher, nor indeed the kind of man whose speeches could take a nation by its guts. But what is a good political leader?

On this side of the Channel, we have institutions that probably make our country the last real monarchy in Europe. These have given us a fair amount of strong political leaders. To what end? Mitterrand was elected on the generous promise of creating one million jobs in one year: he left power after having doubled the number of unemployed people. Chirac gave remarkable and bold speeches on the need to heal the

"social fracture": unemployment is still growing beyond control.

Maybe John Major was not a great leader in that he didn't build an expensive opera house. Le Grand Louvre or La Grande Arche: he was not obsessed by the need to leave a trace in history. Certainly some aspects of his years in Downing Street are deplorable. Yet whether you agree with his policy or not, you cannot deny that he has reformed his country, made the British economy stronger, and brought the unemployment rate to a figure we can only dream of.
ARNAUD DERODE
Seana,
France

Sir: While the manufacturing base of Britain was being decimated in the Thatcher years, the middle-class backbone of the electorate complacently watched the workers in shipbuilding, mining, engineering and steelmaking being dumped on the dole to beg for payments sustained by the boon of North Sea oil. Whatever was happening to the "working classes" was not going to happen to the "middle classes".

When the banks, building societies, civil service, armed forces and local government jobs started to dry up, and when sons and daughters, leaving university, came home, after being told there were very few jobs on offer, the untouchable middle classes suddenly became vulnerable (Letters, 7, 10 May). The dicta of Thatcherism – "industry to be leaner and fitter... industry must

take its medicine" – didn't appear quite so appealing after all. The danger of unemployment now points relentlessly at the throats of Middle Britain. The election result was a foregone conclusion.
G H WHEATLEY
Stratton,
Cornwall

Sir: Those seeking the causes of the Conservative election defeat may not have noticed that John Major attended a party rally here at the Forum ex-cinema on the Isles of March.
M C HITCHCOCK
Bath

Laing was wrong about madness

Sir: Andreas Whitam Smith ("The man who abolished madness", 13 May) suggests that the outcome of R D Laing's approach to treating schizophrenia was "as good or better" than a more medical approach and that "no malfunctioning of the brain has yet been detected that explains mental illness". He is misinformed on both counts.

It was the introduction of chlorpromazine in the 1950s which did more to "abolish madness" than de-medicalising schizophrenia. Scans of the working brain now consistently show the physical basis of hallucinations in people who suffer from schizophrenia.
In his book *Sanity, Madness and*

the Family Laing suggested that a woman's psychotic symptoms were "the outcome of her... interaction with her parents", falsely condemning a generation of parents to the belief that they were responsible for their children's schizophrenia. Community care has many problems, but let us not go back 40 years in the hope that a charismatic but misguided psychotherapist had the solutions.
Dr PETER WHITE
Consultant psychiatrist
St Bartholomew's Hospital
London EC1

Give ethical diplomacy a try

Sir: Rupert Cornwell's cynical piece ("A graveyard of good intent?", 13 May) should not surprise us after so many years when egocentricity has been the only orthodoxy. Yet here we are in these remarkable first few days of a new administration where suddenly it has become possible to become a human being again and to consider the social dimensions of our existence.

In Robin Cook's initiative we are being presented with an opportunity to develop a new and exciting role for Britain which will at last transcend our neurotic colonial nostalgia. I refer to the development of ethical world leadership and international relations at a time when the unfettered enthusiasm for global capitalism has led us to the brink of moral bankruptcy. For goodness sake, let us give it a try.
Dr JOHN ASHTON
Liverpool

Lawful cycling

Sir: I have cycled in London for three years, cycling over 100 miles a week, and I must disagree with Mr Hollinghurst (Letter, 12 May). Cycling on footpaths and the wrong way up one-way streets has nothing to do with safety. It is usually more to do with laziness.

I agree there should be more provision for cyclists, but if we want to be treated as legitimate road users by car drivers then we must be seen to use the roads in a legitimate fashion.
JOHN LEWIS
London SE27

Church chamber

Sir: House of Commons "too adversarial" in its layout (Letters, 5, 6 May)? Need a more "fan-shaped" debating chamber? Look no further than the meeting place of General Synod (itself a parliament) as used by the Parliamentary Labour Party last week. If I remember correctly, it even has doors into voting lobbies.
The Rev PETER KETTLE
London SW19

Not ideal

Sir: Plato had lots of ideas about a state's rulers, but most of them were barmy, if not totally wicked. Whatever deficiencies Pamela Donohue (Letter, 10 May) has detected in MPs, I haven't noticed any that advocate removing all children under 10 from their families.
CHERRY BRADSHAW
North Elham, Kent

essay

We're having an unscripted 'live authentic English experience': there is a loony on the bus, videoing other buses. His wife sits behind him, writing down licence numbers

by
Ann Treneman

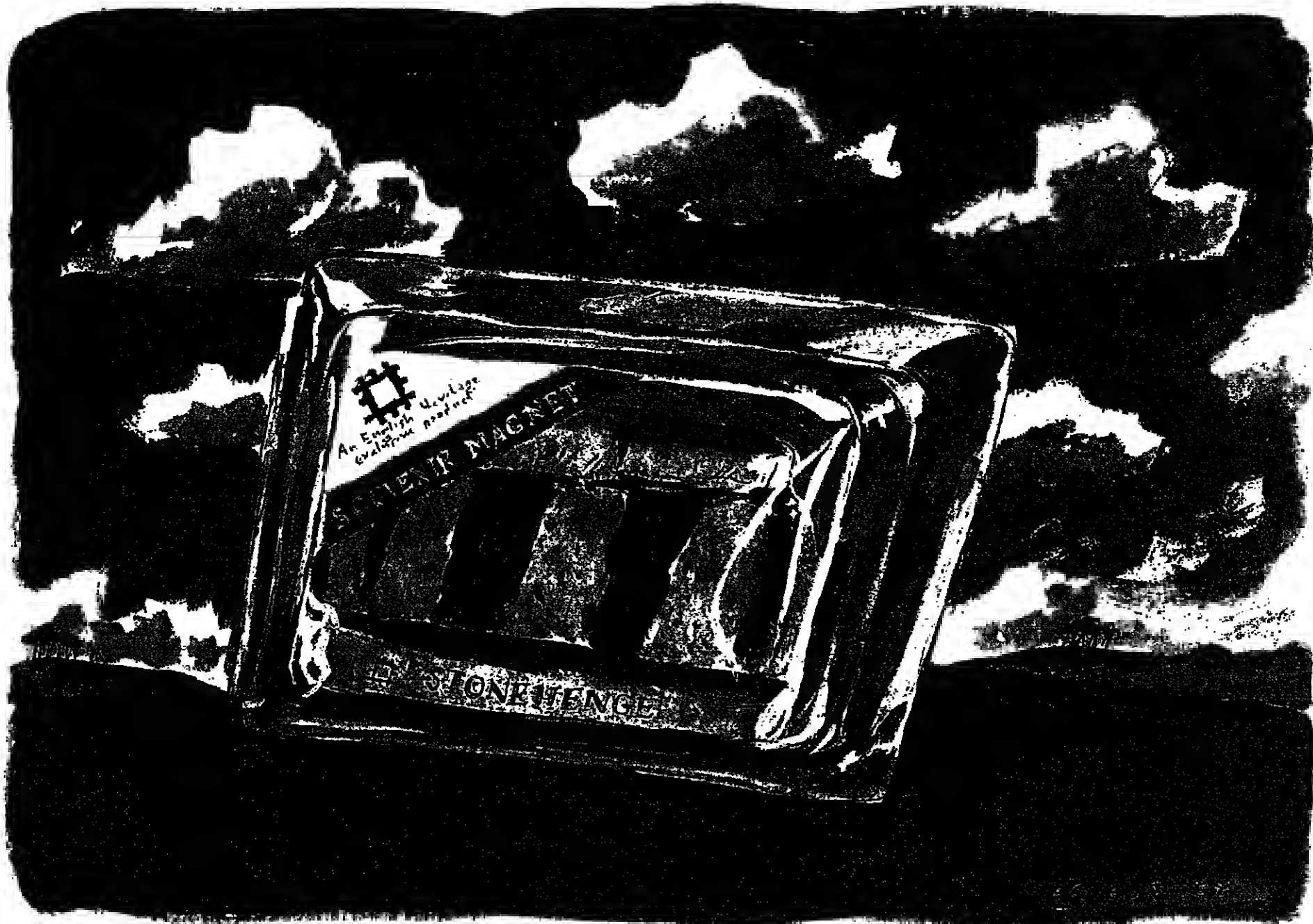
The man had a south London accent, a beer gut, and an overflowing luggage cart that he had positioned squarely in the middle of a moving passageway at Gatwick airport. "Typical Yank!" he said as a woman with bouncy hair, trainers and crisp khaki trousers manoeuvred around him. He shook his head and muttered as she bounced into the distance. She had travelled thousands of miles to see jolly olde worlde England and was not going to stop until she found it. There were so many historic things to do. Beefeaters to see, fridge magnets to buy. Life was too short to stop and try to understand the insults.

That is fortunate because there are quite a few of them flying around if you care to listen. I know because for the past week I have been under cover as a Typical Yank in Tourist Britain. The disguise was easy - sunglasses, checked shirt, camera - though it was a lot harder to put the "gee whizz" factor back into an accent and attitude that has become anglicised over the years. It helped to be accompanied by three children, including a nephew who was just off the plane from a small town called White Salmon in the state of Washington and spoke perfect "gee whizz".

We started off at the Tower and ended at the Hard Rock. In between was Stonehenge, Brighton Pier, William Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, Harrods, Buckingham Palace, Canterbury Cathedral and much more. We met lots of other Americans, French, Danes, Italians and Japanese but hardly any Brits. This seemed a shame because in this parallel universe the sun still has not set on the Empire. The monarchy reigns supreme, the Mother of Parliaments is alive and well and trying to get you to sponsor a brick for £2 in his new theatre. It is all completely unreal except for the fact that this is an industry that rakes in £38bn a year and employs 1.7 million people. With figures like that, who cares if the Empire has no clothes?

It was only when we were actually standing in front of Buckingham Palace that I realised there was nothing to see. "Why is it so cool to see the guard be changed?" asked the nephew as we peered through the gates at a man with a furry condom on his head. It's the kind of question you are not supposed to ask. Instead of answering we stopped and watched as Gordon and Terri Smith of Orlando, Florida, had their photograph taken with the hobby manning the Buckingham Palace car park.

They claimed to be having a fantastic time. "We went to downtown Piccadilly last night and it was just wonderful," said Terri. Now Americans use the word "wonderful" in the same way



The Brit package

that the British use "sorry" - as a polite way of lying - so I kept on questioning. Sure enough, they had noticed something; the natives were less than friendly. The night before they had bought a take-away and tried to eat it on a bench outside the restaurant. They came out and made us leave. They said it was English tradition that we couldn't do that, said Terri. Then, worried that she may have been less than upbeat, she said, "But we just loved Northern Ireland. Everyone was so friendly there."

Back on the mainland, things are not so pleasant and not only because of the security alerts. It does not take long to realise that, in general, the British do not like tourists. Outside of the designated historic zones we quickly become Yanks. Frogs, Eye-ties, Japs and Krauts. "Pay attention now!" shouted a woman as her husband barked (incorrect)

directions at us amid the chaos of Hyde Park Corner. Nor were Beefeaters much better. "Now we spent millions coming up with this glossy brochure, so shall we all have a little look at it and then we can see where you should go?" asked a Yeoman Warder when asked the way to the Crown Jewels. It took five minutes to ascertain they were up a flight of stairs and to the right but we didn't find that out from him.

Lots of hits of Tourist Britain are closed for repair or even just for the day but the price stays the same. It cost £2.50 each to go into Canterbury Cathedral despite the fact that at least half of it (the interesting bit) was out of bounds for the afternoon. It is hard not to love this magnificent cathedral - I have donated willingly many a time - but the brochure is enough to make anyone feel un-Christian. "We hope you enjoy your visit. This great building costs £7,000 each day to maintain and run. We receive no state aid and depend on your donation." I guess they forgot to add the bit about how the Church owns 137,000 acres of agricultural land in the UK plus hits of central London and pieces of America too. If this is poverty, we'd all like some of it.

"I think that was a bit of a rip-off," said the nephew after visiting the Tower. That is American for rip-off and it cost £8.50 for adults, £5.60 for the children and £3.50 for the guide-book. "That includes the Crown Jewels," said the woman taking the cash. She also told us that we had missed the last Yeoman Warder tour and that the Raven Experience had been cancelled.

though she had no idea why. The Crown Jewels were looking more attractive by the minute and so we joined the queue.

And what a queue! If Britain were to have a queueing museum - and it should - then this one would have to be in it. The tortuous route is outlined in velvet ropes which snake back and forth in a series of otherwise empty rooms. On the walls are huge screens on which the Coronation is shown to a blaring "Land of Hope and Glory". When you finally get to the actual jewels, you are transported along a moving corridor that makes it impossible to see the things for longer than a dazzling second. The queue ends with directions on how to get to the Jewel House Shop.

There is a strange symmetry between the Crown Jewels and the Hard Rock Café. "I guess they still serve food there," said a friend without conviction. Well, yes and no. If you want to feel like a sadster - ie, sorry ancient hipster - go to the Hard Rock. The place is full of homesick Americans who still come in droves to eat the same food they ate just a few days ago back home. You can skip the food entirely and head straight for the kiosk or shop where you can queue to spend up to £255 on a bomber jacket. We preferred to spend our money on something lasting, like a bacon double cheeseburger and nachos, and as we chewed we watched one pop video while listening to a different pop song and also perusing the walls. I'd recommend Rod Stewart's leopard-skin catsuit from 1971 over the Crown Jewels any day.

At Stonehenge it became clear why

there were no Brits to be seen: they were too embarrassed. It is unnerving to find one of the wonders of the world dumped by the side of the A303 next to a portable loo and an ice cream stand. What would the people who built this amazing monument think if they could see us, shuffling round the fenced-off stones while listening to little audio tour boxes clamped to our heads? Agents Scully and Mulder may say "the truth is out there" but they haven't been here. I bought a fridge magnet.

A key experience in Tourist Britain is to pay a fortune to go around London on a double-decker bus. "That will be £30, madam, adults are £12 and it is £6 for children," said a rather nice man. The brochure owed something to Soho with its boast of "English Live Guides". We decided to try out the No 15 bus instead and soon were having an unscripted "live authentic English experience": there was a loony on the bus. He sat in the front seat, videoing other buses, while his wife sat behind him, writing down licence numbers. "Oh my God, I've got a 45 in front here," he squealed. "Let me look, yep it's the one, and here is the 23. Would you believe it? What a great day this is. I haven't seen that other one since Inverness!"

We did finally take a double-decker tour and, even with the jokes, it wasn't as good as the loony. Ellie, our "live" guide, tried hard. "Two comedians used to live on Tooley Street - one was Charlie Chaplin and the other was a man named John Major," she said as the wind whipped round. She applied

more Chapstick and soon was commenting about how the Tower used to be a mint. "And with walls that thick, I guess you could call it an extra strong mint." I think I even heard the Japanese groan.

Trafalgar Square is very puzzling because it seems a very grand place to give over to a bunch of birds. Here, among the "world-famous pigeons", one can find London's "one and only licensed birdseed seller". Can it be true? Is everyone else selling birdseed illegally? Anything is possible in tourist-land, of course, and this is particularly true in this square, where the humans are even more frenzied than the birds. "Here! Here! Here!" shouted one man, desperate to attract a bird to sit on his hand. One Italian had managed to get four to line up on his arm and was turning around in slow motion as his friend circled him, frantically shouting away other tourists as he videoed this amazing feat.

Away from this madness, the real Britons are walking on by and the tourists are only too happy to let them. The woman with the bouncy hair does not want to meet an "authentic" soft Londoner any more than he wants to meet her. The Special Relationships is one of mutual loathing, really. If Tourist Britain is a conspiracy it is a happy one. Tourists don't want to meet real people, they want to "experience" unreal things.

Last weekend the demonstrators outnumbered the pigeons in Trafalgar Square when a march for the striking Liverpool dockers turned nasty. Shed were shut, roads cordoned off, helicopters buzzed. For a brief time, the police state was on full public view. One on the tour bus gave a damn. The question on everyone's tongue was whether this meant we would miss seeing Buckingham Palace. Long after the monarchy is dead, tourists will be queuing to see a crown that no one wears anymore. After all, this is what makes Britain great, isn't it?

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Jekyll and Howard, a classic horror tale

"There is something of the night about him," said Ann Widdecombe of Mr Michael Howard, barely repressing a shiver. She did not know how near the truth she was. Here is a brief extract from the classic horror story *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Howard*...

IT WAS a period when London was resounding to the news of the most horrific crimes.

Nobody could quite say what these crimes were. Some said that many people had been unjustly locked up in captivity for long periods for committing petty crimes or even no crime at all.

Others related instances of men who had pleaded for entry to the British Isles but had been cruelly sent back to their own countries, there to be mistreated or even murdered. There were rumours of men who had been unfairly dismissed from their senior posts, and of other men who were refused justice in the teeth of all the evidence. In some way all these

crimes and many more too horrible to relate were connected, and in some way that one could never pin down, they were all connected with the name of Mr Howard.

"Ever met this fellow Howard?" asked Utterson the lawyer one night, of his old friend Dr Jekyll.

To his surprise Dr Jekyll looked confused and shaken, and said nothing. His lack of response was covered by old Dr Lanyon, who had been eagerly listening.

"Mr Howard? Yes, I've met him. Just the once, but I shall never forget the experience. It was at a party given by that Irish fellow, the one that calls himself a doctor..."

"Mawhinney?" offered someone. "That's the one. Well, somebody tugged at my shoulder and asked if I wanted to meet Mr Howard, and knowing no better I said, 'Yes, why not?' and found myself talking to..."

His voice fell away, as if he could not quite believe his memory. "Put it this way," said old Dr Lanyon. "When I met this fellow Howard I had a



Miles Kingston

feeling of something being not quite right with him. There is nothing actually deranged about him, but... He had spectacles which were very large, yet the eyes behind seemed larger still. He had a smile which came and went at complete variance with his words. This was because his words were heated but his smile was cold. Even his large moon-like spectacles are warmer than the eyes behind. In his presence I felt an overpowering sensation of

complete and utter..."

He fell silent again.

"Evil?" tried someone.

"Horror?" said another.

"No, not that," said Dr Lanyon. "It was smugness. I felt that Mr Howard possessed an other-worldly talent for being pleased with himself."

"Yes, I have heard it said that he is a monster of complacency," said Utterson the lawyer.

"Are you feeling all right, Jekyll, old man?" Dr Lanyon asked suddenly.

Dr Jekyll did look ghastly. White and perspiring, he was clutching at his collar.

"I'll... I'll just take some air, I think," he said. "Very close in here..."

He staggered out of the club while the rest of us stared after him.

"What's wrong with him?" said someone.

"He's said to be an associate of Mr Howard," said Utterson. "I expect he cannot bear to hear his friend talked of like this."

"There's worse," said Dr Lanyon gloomily. "I hear now that this Howard has ambitions to take over the country."

"WHAT!?" said Utterson.

"A man who has been condemned by all the top judges of the country? A man who has consistently brought the Home Office into disrepute? Lead the country? Can they be serious?"

"Keep your voice down," said someone. "Here he comes now."

And sure enough, the door of the club's coffee room opened and the surprising small figure of Mr Howard entered, preceded by a huge smiling air of spectacles. He passed from table to table saying something like, "I trust you will vote for me in soft tones, though it was hard to hear from far off."

"What a shame that Dr Jekyll is not here," said someone. "Of all the group he is the only one of us who seemed willing to talk to the man, should he come this way, and now he is not here."

It was only when he was going home that Utterson reflected that he had never seen Jekyll and Howard in the same room together. It was a reflection which was made a lot more sense in the months to come.

مكتبة من الامم المتحدة

Which way now, John?



The way Major has treated his party by jumping clear in their moment of need shows the depth of his contempt, says Anthony Bevin

John Major's decision to desert the bridge of the Tory ship, left holed and rudderless by the May Day election defeat, is a gross abdication of responsibility, a dereliction of duty, an act of staggering selfishness.

It is a measure of the disaster that has befallen the Conservatives that he seems in notice, even less care about, the way in which his leader has treated his party.

Yet Mr Major has set it on course or the rocks, lashed down the wheel, and jumped ship with gay abandon, deserting sinking ships; it is a contention of the sea that captains are last to leap off.

Yet here is a man who owes everything to the Conservative Party, a party that gave him one of the safest parliamentary seats in the land, an ear, front-bench apprenticeship, and the patronage of Margaret Thatcher.

Major undoubtedly had luck, and he has a cleverness that left brighter men standing in his shadow. There was also chameleon-like modesty, an ability to blend, that made him the ideal successor to Thatcher when Michael Heseltine broke her grip on power in the 1990 Tory leadership coup.

Mr Major's election victory in 1992 confounded all those critics who card about his lack of style and patronised him beyond endurance. He beat the odds, and the pundits, and won office, he did more than any other Prime Minister to try to solve the insoluble conundrum of Northern Ireland; he successfully negotiated the need of Europe and the splits and it generated within his own party and he reduced inflation to record lows.

He broke his word on taxes, humiliated himself and the country with the debate over the exchange rate mechanism and meddled so much with the National Health Service and the education system that he made them prisoners of voters' concern. But he was also Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and leader of the Conservative Party, for more than six years no mean achievement for a Briton boy.

During the election, Major said that he wanted to move the Conservative "reunion" into a new phase, in which people for whom life was a struggle began to share in the "finer things of life". He painted a picture in which Tony Blair threatened "a Disunited Kingdom drifting towards a United States of Europe".

Scale of defeat punctured the joy and the horror, at a stroke. But it ended the struggle between the who had urged Major to stay on after the party through its loss, and the who had advised him to quit at once, and return to a "real life".

His friends who had advised him to quit believe they had Major's best interests at heart. What good would it be served to stay on, they ask. Better get a new leader quickly in place. The divisions that have broken out between the various contenders to the succession were ever-present in the play and, indeed, were one of the cases of defeat. If Major was unable to keep them from breaking out at the height of the election campaign, what chance had he got of keeping them down in the aftermath of defeat? But let them get on with it.

Other friends argue that Major has

done nothing more than Labour's James Callaghan in 1979, Michael Foot in 1983, or Neil Kinnock in 1992, when defeated leaders left their parties to their own devices in choosing a successor.

In fact, Foot knew that he was in effect handing the party on to Neil Kinnock just as Neil Kinnock knew he was handing on to John Smith. The only appropriate parallel to what Major has just done is the Callaghan precedent, when there was no guarantee as to what the Parliamentary Labour Party would do, and it turned to Foot.

As Kenneth Clarke reminded Tory colleagues who might be tempted to back a "hard-line nationalist and anti-European" candidate to succeed Major, Labour's election of Foot "cleared the way for a generation of Conservative rule".

Major has left the party in the lurch, with no clue as to who will replace him. But after all they have done to him over the last six years, his friends argue, why should he care?

Enemies and rivals have stabbed him in the back; they have knuckled him, tied his hands together, and expected him to fight an election against one of the most sophisticated political machines ever devised by Peter Mandelson. The Conservatives, Major's friends add, have now got their just deserts.

No one would dispute that the warring Tory factions have been asking for this mess. They do, indeed, deserve it. But what of the thousands upon thousands of loyal, decent, hard-working activists up and down the country who have given heart and soul to the Conservative Party? What about the many, many people who have slogged their guts out, canvassing and arguing and persuading reluctant and hostile supporters to go out and vote? Not to mention the millions of people who did just that – those who went out and voted not so much for the Conservative Party as for that nice, lovely man, John Major.

Do they deserve this anarchy, this half-baked leadership contest for a party that has not yet had a chance to grieve for its loss? Not at all. Yet such is the depth of Major's gratitude, that he has thrown them to the wolves, like so much rancid mutton.

There are 164 Conservative MPs in today's House of Commons. Many of the newcomers have been around long enough to know the difference between William Hague and Michael Howard, Peter Lilley and Kenneth Clarke. But is it really right that the new leader of the Conservative Party should be elected so precipitately by so few?

What does it do for the morale of an already demoralised party to know that they have no say whatsoever in the choice of the man, and it is a man, who is to lead them into the new millennium? Of course soundings will be taken. And the soundings will then be ignored in the privacy of a secret ballot.

All that lies at the door of John Major, who could so easily have decided to see the party through its mourning, who could so easily have initiated a review of the leadership election rules, who could so easily have seen the party through to safe har-



What, me worry? I would sooner be watching cricket Dylan Martinez

bour. He prefers to watch cricket instead.

If there was one reason why the Conservative Party adored Alec Douglas-Home it was because he selflessly agreed to serve under Edward Heath, as shadow Foreign Secretary, after Heath became the party's first elected leader in 1965.

Home had stayed on after the defeat of October 1964, seeing in the new leadership election process – which still exists today – and remaining for nine months before leaving the coast clear for Heath's election.

He then volunteered to lend his weight and experience to the shadow cabinet and went on to serve as Foreign Secretary for the duration of the 1970-74 Heath government.

Today's shadow cabinet is so devoid

of weight and experience that Major is serving as Leader of the Opposition, shadow Foreign Secretary and shadow Defence Secretary.

But Major's friends say that as soon as a new leader is elected, he will be off. We will not see him for dust. There is no question of him offering his services to the new leader; he will have done his bit, and that will be that.

Anyone who seeks gratitude in politics is a fool. But Major must truly despise his party to treat it with such contempt.

During the election, one of Labour's campaign themes was the weakness of Major's leadership. They were right. He could not lead a horse to water, but he is now letting the Conservative Party wander off into the wilderness.



The party is in disarray and has yet to realise the extent of its historic defeat. However, says Andrew Marr, New Labour may help by forcing the Conservatives to create a modern and moderate political party

Even now, the Conservative leadership has not heard the message. Even now – with the main roof fallen in, the west wing being stripped by riotous peasantry, the stables burned to the ground, the implications of the party's historic defeat have not yet sunk in.

The Tories may be facing a decade or more in opposition, while New Labour single-mindedly tries to replace them as the country's natural governing party. Power to decide Britain's European future has been lost to them. By the time the Conservatives form another government the likelihood is that the high tide of centralising federalism will have passed, and some new settlement established.

During that period, some Tories may take ever more aggressively nationalist positions. But they will be able to act, at best, as commentators and political hecklers. In terms of practical politics, this historic question will now be resolved without them. Sensible Tories will take note and ask themselves what future their party has if it becomes a British nationalist ginger group.

But, of course, the Conservatives have not only lost their immediate influence in the European argument. They have lost most of their best leaders and much of what would have been their new parliamentary talent.

Their traditional methods of fund-raising are under imminent threat from reforming Labour legislation. So is their in-built hereditary majority in the House of Lords. They have lost their patronage; in time, many thousands of their quango appointees are likely to be sacked or not replaced. Yet they scarcely exist as a serious political force in local government either, though it is here they will rebuild first.

After their wipe-out defeats in Scotland, Wales, northern England and most major provincial cities, it is doubtful whether the Conservatives can even describe themselves, in 1997, as a great national party – never mind the great national party.

It is, in short, rather like the condition of a devastated country after it has suffered military defeat – the shattered leadership, the broken cities, the bankrupt treasury, the lack of overseas allies.

Given all this, how has the provisional Tory leadership been behaving? Not well, is the short answer. Within a few days, their leader deserts them (see left). There is a short, bungled champagne pact which collapses a few hours later. Not very coded mutual abuse is enthusiastically traded. One ex-minister describes Michael Howard as having "something of the night" about him and prepares for a public denunciation of his behaviour in office (and is rewarded with vicious innuendos spread against her).

They are behaving, then, much as they behaved in power, and if they carry on, it will have much the same effect. Anyway, partly because of the timetable imposed by John Major's decision to quit quickly, they are doing this the wrong way round.

The first question for the Conservatives ought not to be "whom?" but "what?". The choice of leader should follow and reflect the party's philosophy for opposition, a plan agreed after much more debate and self-scrutiny than we have seen so far. It also needs to involve many more people than those MPs who have scrambled back to Westminster – it needs to draw in the voluntary side of the party, councillors, Tory intellectuals, MEPs and many of the ousted but still formidable bly bright *ancien régime*. And this wider debate needs to precede, though not by long, a thorough reform of the party, opening it up more to the views of those who sustain it through the country and who rightly feel let down by the behaviour of some national politicians.

That, in itself, would help the process of rebuilding the party's standing in the country. And by depriving the Tories of much of their secret corporate revenue, Labour is doing them a favour. A healthy democratic party thrives by

engaging with millions of ordinary supporters – using them as its antennae, listening to them and sometimes arguing with them. Being obliged to raise money from them as well ensures that that happens.

In some parts of the country, the remaking of the Tories will, or should, be radical. The Welsh and Scottish Conservatives are in the humiliating position of being left without a single MP, and seeing Liberal Democrats and nationalists become the opposition to Labour. The most urgent task for them is how to deal with the referendum later this year on devolution: should they carry on their pre-electoral opposition or should they accept that the argument has been lost?

They need to be very careful about opposing devolution. Apart from anything else, they need it. As this paper has argued for years, a Scottish parliament in particular, elected under proportional representation, is the likeliest way for the Conservatives there to recover. If it has tax-raising powers, so much the better: parties of the right require fear of higher taxation as a powerful incentive at the ballot box. Whether the Scottish Tories need to change their name, to Unionists or Progressives, is debatable (a step too far, I think). But they certainly need to reorientate themselves as a determinedly Scottish party working in an Edinburgh parliament and inside the UK.

In England, the Conservatives have to relearn from New Labour the lesson Labour once learnt from them: extremism is political death. The Tories need to oppose Blair in the Commons as tough-minded but mainstream supporters of welfare – the people asking numbers questions about every tax or spending change – and as moderate pro-Europeans and wary constitutionalists.

This last will be particularly important, facing a huge Labour majority and a highly centralised Downing Street operation. With weak opposition and strong governing-party discipline, there is a serious danger of the Commons losing yet more of its vigour, independence and purpose. It is now the job of the Tories to help make sure that doesn't happen.

Beyond the Commons, they need to reverse their former contempt for local government. Now in opposition, they need to discard the habits of centralism and become tolerant, liberal Tory pluralists, working with the grain of the times, not against it. For instance, they are bound to be defeated if they try to block Lords reform – so why shouldn't they attack the interim Labour proposal of an appointed chamber, and fight for an elected House of Peers instead?

The simple story is that the Tories have to start again, with new structures, new agendas, new political thinking. That is the proper reaction to a defeat of such dramatic proportions.

But there is something which matters almost more than any of that. The Conservatives have to get themselves liked again. They have been so widely disliked for so long that this may seem an uphill task. It isn't. The British are quick forgetters, suspicious of those in power and relatively tolerant of people who confess mistakes. So long as the new Tory leadership is not too haughty, or bitter, shows that it can learn lessons and is friendly to new ideas, the Conservatives will be back. Under whose leadership? Most of the above sounds a little like a plea for Kenneth Clarke. It is.

Sultan Mehmet II and the EU



Hamish McRae IN ISTANBUL

History may divide Turkey from Europe, but we are not entirely prisoners to events hundreds of years ago

Europe looks different from the south. Northern Europeans – not Britons but also Swedes and Danes – repeatedly show in the surveys as the most sceptical of all forms of closer European integration: the single currency, common foreign policy and so on.

By contrast, the "Club Med" countries of the European Union, in particular Spain and Italy, are enthusiasts. This week Italy has been accusing other EU countries and in particular Germany of "monoculturalism" for its opposition to Italian entry to the single currency. Italy feels particularly sore that its efforts to cut its budget deficit to meet the Maastricht 3 per cent limit are being rejected. Sure, it will miss the target, but its deficit this year of perhaps 3.5 per cent (current estimates are 3.8 per cent) will not be far away from Germany's performance. There is a serious deterioration in the German fiscal position as a result of lower-than-expected tax revenues and higher unemployment payments, further details of which should be disclosed tomorrow.

Nowhere is this southern European feeling of rejection more evident than here in Turkey, which has made a sustained effort over the past 20 years to join the EU, only to be – as it feels – fobbed off. Turkey joined the European Customs Union at the beginning of this year and so has something close to a free trade agreement with the EU: not a complete one in practice because of EU anti-dumping legislation. But actual membership has been resisted by other EU members, so that there is a real prospect that in 10 years countries such as the Czech Republic and Poland will be full members of the EU and Turkey will not.

Of course, by then some members of Her Majesty's Opposition may have got back into office and Britain might like to trade places with Turkey; they could have full integration and we could have a free-trade agreement. Why is there this resistance to Turkish membership? There are a number of perfectly legitimate concerns which are voiced in public by European politicians. They include worries about the Turkish record in human rights, in particular with regard to the Kurdish minority, worries about the fragility of the democracy here – there were military coups in 1960, 1971, and 1980, though another one currently seems most unlikely; and of course

there are economic concerns. The economic arguments are powerful. You are not advised to change your money daily any more, but inflation last year was still 70 per cent. Real interest rates have fallen from 30 per cent in January and are "only" 22 per cent. That makes life difficult for the business community. But no one is suggesting that Turkey should qualify for Maastricht. In any case the real economy (as opposed to the financial one) is doing quite well. Growth has been excellent at 8 per cent last year and probably 5 per cent this. There is a current account deficit, but that is financed by "suitcase trade" (ie unrecorded exports to former Eastern bloc countries, and capital inflows. Even the budget deficit looks like being only 5 per cent of GDP this year, not that far from other European countries, though it may rise next.

These are all serious difficulties, but they are not unsurmountable ones. So why is there so little enthusiasm within the EU for Turkish entry? There is one obvious barrier, which EU countries will not openly acknowledge, but which many people in Turkey suspect is the real reason: Islam. European nations may be among the most secular in the world, but they do not want a non-Christian nation in their club.

Maybe. But I think there is another reason for the resistance, and a reason to which the European Union politicians would be wise to acknowledge more widely. It is history.

You feel it here in this great European city, looking out across the Bosphorus to Asia, a mile or so away. On another visit last autumn I walked the five-mile length of Constantinople's land walls, built under Theodosius II in 413, and only breached once, more than a thousand years later by the forces of Sultan Mehmet II in 1453. The walls are still intact, and save for a couple of motorways that have recently been punched through them, that gap where the Turkish forces swept through is the only breach.

We live with that breach now. The European Union lives with it. Turkey lives with it. Turkey is a member of Nato: millions of Turks live in Germany, where they and their descendants help to assemble the BMWs and other examples of German engineering excellence we all aspire to buy. So Turkey is intimately bound in to Europe's security and its economy. But there is a difference, deep in history.

There is a great temptation to ignore history: it is frustrating, even irrational to behave as prisoners to events hundreds of years in the past. But of course we are not entirely prisoners, as the EU itself demonstrates. It represents a very successful effort to learn from the dreadful history of Europe in the first half of this century. But the lesson from the EU's attitude to Turkey also needs to be respected, and respected widely. Surely that lesson is that Europe will always be a mixture. There will be people in its northern fringes who see themselves as different; there will be Franco/German plans; and there will be aspirants, like Turkey, whose interests need to be understood. Can we learn to enjoy that diversity?

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obituaries / gazette

Brigadier Michael Harbottle

Of all United Nations activity, it is peacekeeping, the most original of international endeavours, which is the least understood. Peacekeeping depends not on fighting soldiers but on troops trained in mediation and conciliation who need self-control and patience. With the death of Brigadier Michael Harbottle, Britain has lost one of its greatest peacekeeping experts.

There was more to Harbottle's beliefs than wishing to silence the guns of aggression. Peacekeeping led him to a revolutionary idea which involved a new role for the world's armed forces. To create a rational and ethical new world order the world's governments needed to rethink the role of the military. It was a belief often lost on politicians who easily dismissed what Harbottle called his new philosophy of service.

Harbottle believed that there were vital humanitarian tasks which armed forces could perform to alleviate the suffering caused by environmental catastrophe and war. That peacekeeping and peace-building were indispensable and invaluable instruments of peace were, for Harbottle, self-evident truths; there was more to soldiering than fighting or preparing to fight. There were non-military considerations to be taken into account concerning economic, humanitarian and environmental security – priority concerns which called for new perceptions and perspectives.

Harbottle's ideas did not go down too well in either the Ministry of Defence or the Foreign Office, where there were plenty who argued that the armed forces should have one single task – to defend the nation against aggression. But for Harbottle, the notion that defensive weaponry was the best and only real insurance for peace was outdated – an obsession which caused nations to overspend on weapons research and production to the detriment of economic needs.

This was indeed a surprising view from a soldier trained at Sandhurst. In 1937 he had been commissioned into the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, and after a distinguished record in the Second World War he was made com-

mander of the 1st Royal Green-jackets, becoming in the early 1940s security commander with the British force in Aden. But his road to Damascus came afterwards, in 1966, when he was appointed Chief of Staff to the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus.

In a saner world in which national governments have less sway on who gets UN jobs, Harbottle would have continued his UN work. But after two years in Cyprus, the Ministry of Defence would not accede to a request from the UN Secretary General U Thant for him to continue and so Harbottle took early retirement.

He went on to write *The Impartial Soldier* (1970) and *The Blue Berets* (1971), the first books – after the debacle of the UN's Congo mission – to look at peacekeeping in a positive way, drawing distinctions between true peacekeeping – the dogged holding of a buffer zone – and the sort of "pacification" policing in support of civil governments in which the British army then considered itself expert, but which was more heavily armed.

Harbottle believed that colonial enforcement actions were much less positive than peacekeeping and that the two should not be confused. UN peacekeeping was far from standard military practice. In these two books, Harbottle described a peacekeeping mission as the manifest will of the community of nations to achieve peace. He saw a single blue beret at a checkpoint as a symbol; the soldier's weapon was not the rifle slung over his shoulder, but his credibility. Appropriately used, Harbottle argued, peacekeeping could be hugely successful if it started at ground level – the most useful soldier of all was the one around before grievances got out of hand.

His work for peace began in earnest with his appointment as vice-president of the International Peace Academy, an independent, non-partisan international institution dedicated to the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts between and within states which had just been created in New York. It worked closely with the UN and drew on a worldwide network of statesmen and scholars. Harbottle collated the

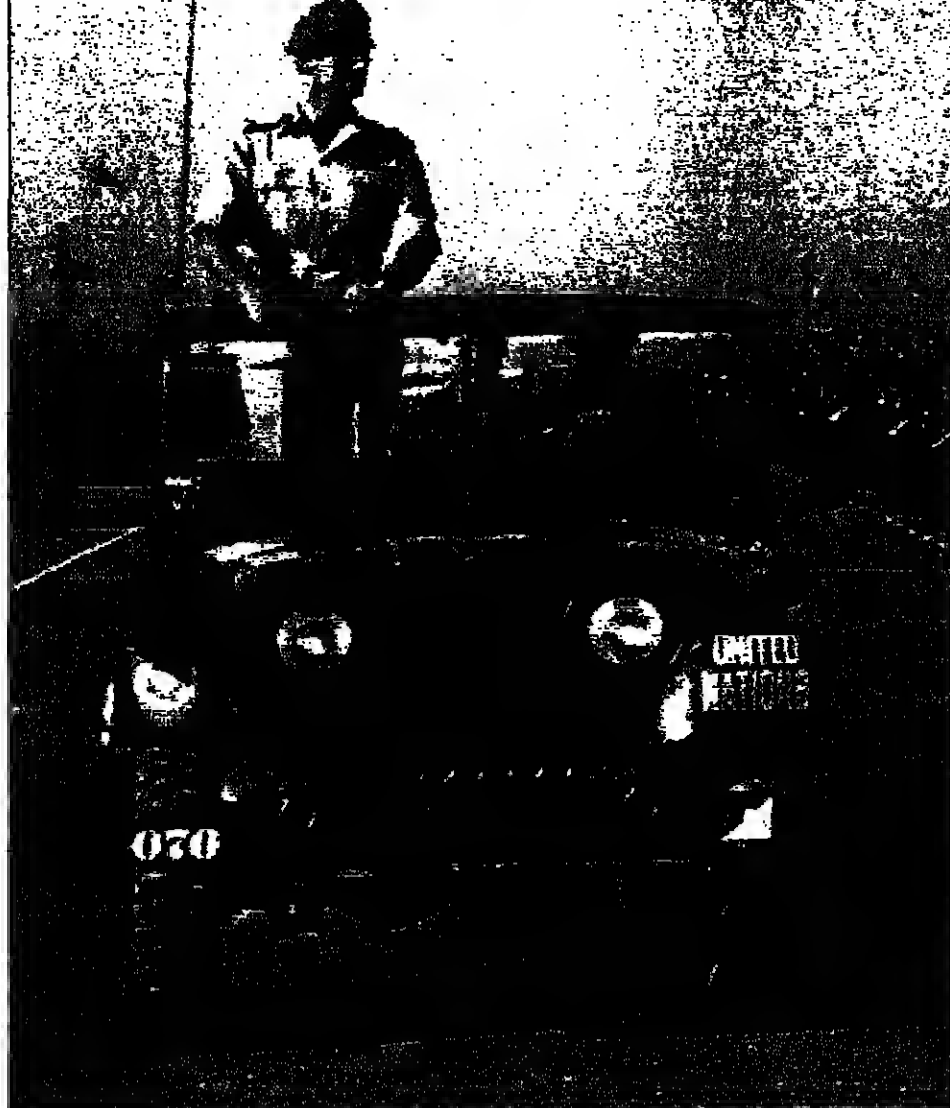
Peacekeeper's Handbook (1978), considered to be a definitive work which the UN issued to more than 70 troop-contributing countries as an instruction manual for peacekeeping operations. Between 1974 and 1979 he was a visiting lecturer at Bradford University's School of Peace Studies.

Harbottle's practical peacekeeping experience led him to a belief that international confidence-building would only work through disarmament and he was instrumental in the creation of Generals for Peace and Disarmament in 1981, when east-west relations were glacial: the Soviet Union was deploying SS20 nuclear missiles and Nato Pershing rockets and Cruise missiles. The organisation consisted of a group of like-minded retired soldiers from Nato countries, who met their East European counterparts to develop co-operation rather than confrontation between east and west.

By now, in Whitehall, opinion was effectively poisoned against Harbottle and a whispering campaign described him as a traitor consorting with the enemy, particularly after the Soviet Ambassador in Washington DC, Alexander Dobrynin, endorsed his work. But no one who really knew Harbottle thought that he was in any way politicised; his beliefs sprang from direct peacekeeping experience. He was mischievous though and he could make his critics and those in power feel much uncomfortable with his direct common-sense approach.

After the fall of the Berlin wall, Harbottle transformed Generals for Peace and Disarmament into a world-wide consultative association which comprised senior officers in national armed forces from all over the world. The association focused on the prevention of armed conflict; typically, Harbottle described the association as a "military pugwash".

Long before the post-Cold War tragedies of Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda, Harbottle realised how badly served the international community was by what he considered to be a "chicken-hearted" Security Council. Because of the council's habit of mandating the impossible and providing inad-



Positive action: Harbottle as Chief of Staff to the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus, 1966. Photograph: Topham

equate resources, Harbottle believed that future security lay in regional and sub-regional arrangements working under the terms of the UN Charter.

The scope of the Worldwide Consultative Association of Retired Generals and Admirals stretched way beyond the European theatre to Asia and Africa, and there was shared experience on how the military could be used in modern peacekeeping. Two international meetings were held in 1993 and 1994, and at the time of his death Harbottle was helping to plan another event at which a proposal for regional security for Africa was to be discussed.

The effect on his views of his wife Eirwen was recognised by

everyone involved in his peace work. It was she who inspired the creation of the charitable Peace Child Charitable Trust which helped children from around the world to produce a successful booklet *Rescue Mission: Planet Earth*. Another recent project involved Greek and Turkish children on Cyprus jointly undertaking an environmental study of the island. Eirwen believed that "new thinking" should be taught in schools and that no section of society could remain indifferent to the ideal of peace. With Eirwen Harbottle created in 1983 the Centre for International Peacebuilding, based in their home in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire.

Last December an historic statement was issued through the Centre for International Peacebuilding, signed by 62 officers – including three former Supreme Allied Commanders Europe, the former Commander in Chief, US Strategic Command, and a former head of Russian Security – demanding the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Linda Melvern

Michael Neale Harbottle, soldier and peacekeeper; born 7 February 1917; OBE 1959; Security Commander, Aden 1962-64; Chief of Staff, UN Peacekeeping Force Cyprus 1966-68; married 1940, Alison Humphreys (one son, one daughter), 1972 Eirwen Stmonds; died 1 May 1997.

Jack Fishman

Jack Fishman believed that experience was the best education available and he ensured that he filled his life with as much as he could get: he achieved success as journalist, writer, songwriter, and spycatcher.

Born in the East End of London, to Jewish refugee parents of Russian, Polish and German origin, as a boy Fishman many times visited Berlin. On one occasion, when he was 10, he stumbled on a Nazi rally where Adolf Hitler, on descending the steps, walked up to Jack, who then had a full crop of blond hair, and pulled him on the head – the reason Fishman later gave for his early hair loss.

His father died when he was young and as a result he left school at 13 and got his first job working as a tea-boy on a newspaper. He soon developed a talent for writing.

He worked his way up to become news editor, then deputy editor, of two of Britain's largest national newspapers, for the Kemsley newspaper group and later the Thomson organisation. He then went on to edit Thomson's largest Sunday newspaper, *Empire News*, where he remained until the paper was sold to the *News of the World* in 1961.

Fishman specialised in political journalism, and also had a particular interest in intelligence work. He was credited with the exposure of the most notorious spy Britain has ever known – Kim Philby. Following a tip from behind the Iron Curtain, the British government was alerted to the presence of a Russian agent within the Foreign Office. Fishman became convinced that Philby was the agent and set about using the national press to expose him.

However, British libel laws prevented the story from being published in Britain, so, with the aid of two of Fishman's friends on the *New York Daily News*, the story was broken in America. The matter was then raised in Parliament, finally leading to Philby's defection to Moscow in 1963. Despite suggestions that Fishman was working for the CIA or MI5, he always claimed that he was merely acting as a journalist.

After leaving the Thomson Group, Fishman worked as a freelance writer. His first book had been published in 1954, *The Seven Men of Spandau*, about the seven Hitler henchmen who escaped the gallows at Nuremberg and were sentenced to be the sole inmates of the vast Spandau Prison in Berlin. His second, *The Life of Joseph Stalin*, was published in 1963, followed by *My Darling Clementine* (1963), a biography of Winston Churchill's wife. This was reprinted three times within the first month of its release, and became an instant best-seller in Britain and America, remaining in the list of top ten books for a further year.

Based on his reaction to a pilot for a new American television show, in 1964 Fishman signed the literary rights to *The Man From UNCLE*, and was responsible for editing and publishing all the related books. In 1974 he published a collection of Winston Churchill's letters and documents, *If I Lived My Life Again*. He wrote two further best-sellers, the fictional *KG200* (1977) and *The*

Walls Came Tumbling Down (1982). *Long Knives and Iron Memories* (1986) returned to the subject of Spandau Prison, concluding the story begun in his first book.

Bul Fishman had a further career, as a songwriter, which he initially kept very quiet about, preferring to use pseudonyms. He felt that no one would take him seriously as a writer if they knew he was writing pop songs. In the 1950s, while recovering from tuberculosis after being discharged from the RAF, to amuse himself he had started writing lyrics to music he heard on the radio. He later sent them to publishers in "Tin Pan Alley" in Denmark Street, London.

Many artists of the time recorded one or other of his songs, and he was awarded the first ever Ivor Novello award in 1955 for the song "Everywhere", but under the false name Larry Kahn – he sent a stand-in to collect the award in order to protect his anonymity. He also received the American BMI award for "Why Don't They Understand". To enable him to concentrate on his books, Fishman stopped writing music between 1963 and 1968, but when he returned, he was responsible for co-writing several hits including "Help Yourself", "If I Only Had a Heart", "Something is Happening" and "If Paradise is Half as Nice". During 1969-71 his songs achieved sales of more than 10 million records.

Fishman's introduction to film music was Sam Goldwyn's *Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), and Betty Bon's *Miranda* (1947), and he later collaborated with many renowned composers within this field, including Stanley Black, Ron Goodwin, Ennio Morricone and Maurice Jarre. He worked with Roy Budd on



Fishman: spycatcher, songwriter

theme songs for *Soldier Blue* (1970) and *Get Carter* (1970). He acted as music supervisor in the Seventies for Cymion/MGM films, overseeing the output of over 100 feature films. As part of this year's 50th anniversary Cannes Film Festival, he was to have been commemorated for his contribution to film music.

Jack Fishman was a voracious reader, who continued to work throughout his life simply because he loved it. Despite his success, he preferred to lead a modest life, living for the last 30 years with his family in Highgate, north London.

Paul Fishman

Jack Fishman, journalist, writer and songwriter; born 14 June 1920; married 1944 Lillian Richmond (two sons); died London 10 April 1997.

Professor James Scott

James Scott will primarily be remembered as the Regional Medical Officer for the Trent Regional Health Authority from 1973 to 1988. However, behind this, there is an outstanding contribution to health care and medical education, primarily in the East Midlands.

Scott was born in 1931 and received his medical education at Trinity College, Dublin, qualifying in 1955. House Officer posts in Doncaster and York followed, then further experience as pathologist in Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin (1957-59) and Registrar in Chemical Pathology at the United Sheffield Hospital (1959-61). During this time he wrote his doctoral thesis on the melanin in urine of patients with malignant melanoma and this was awarded MD in 1965.

In 1961 Scott became a trainee medical officer with the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board, and progressed to become Assistant and Principal Assistant Medical Officer.

In 1965 the Royal Commission on Medical Education (the

Todd Committee), in an interim report, recommended that two new medical schools should be created to increase the supply of doctors to care for the population. They were to be the first medical faculties founded this century and were to be placed within the universities of Nottingham and Southampton.

Scott thus joined in 1965 the planning team which was to create Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham. He joined David Greenfield, the foundation Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Robert Graham, the University Assistant Registrar and John Dann, the Planning Officer. This group shaped and formed the integrated medical centre dedicated to patient care, teaching and research, such that the distinction between health service and university should be invisible. Scott was thus highly instrumental in creating Queen's Medical Centre and shaping the way it works.

It is easy to criticise any large building as being vast and unwieldy. However, Queen's Medical Centre does function as an



Scott: new medical schools

integrated centre and this is a great credit to the initial planners and the architects. Scott served on the Board of Medical Studies which was the forerunner of the Faculty Board and was involved in the development of the new undergraduate curriculum. He also became a Senior Lecturer in the University Department of Community Medicine under the enthusiastic leadership of the foundation Professor, Maurice Backett.

In 1971, Scott was appointed

as Senior Administrative Medical Officer to the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board, which in 1973 transformed itself into the Trent Regional Health Authority. He remained there as Regional Medical Officer until retirement in 1988. This post allowed him to oversee and continue to contribute to the development of the Nottingham Hospitals and the University Medical Faculty which produced its first graduate in 1975.

While he was at Trent, Leicester University founded its medical school, which produced the first graduates in 1980. The creation, successful development and establishment of two new medical schools with associated hospital and health service facilities, in 15 years, in the southern half of the Trent Region, a unique achievement in which Scott played a pivotal role.

As Regional Medical Officer, Scott was a member and President of the Hospital Committee of the European Economic Union from 1980 to 1988, the first Briton to hold the post. The hospital committee comprised

four health service delegates from each of the then nine Common Market countries. Its objective was to promote a uniform high standard of hospital care and to foster efficiency, effectiveness and humanity in the organisation and running of hospital services.

On retiring as the Regional Medical Officer, Scott became a Professor of Health Service Planning in the Department of Community Medicine in Sheffield University. He maintained his educational interests and was chairman of the Board of Governors of the Mid-Trent College of Nursing and Midwifery from 1989 until the time of its incorporation into the Faculty of Medicine and Life Science of Nottingham University.

Jim Scott enjoyed the Dorset and had a property there which he carefully cared for and renovated. Philately was his hobby, and on the day of release of new issue stamps, he would be seen making his way to a post office to enhance his collection. He did not enjoy good health and for over half his life, was af-

licted with chest disease. In spite of this, there was a determination to succeed and an ability to overcome this adversity.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret, the Director of Nursing Services at Crumpsall Hospital in Manchester.

J.B. Bourke

James Alexander Scott, medical administrator; born 3 July 1931; Pathologist, Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin 1957-59; Registrar in Clinical Pathology, United Sheffield Hospitals 1959-61; Trainee, later Assistant and Principal, Assistant Senior Medical Officer, Sheffield Regional Hospital Board 1961-70; Senior Administrative Medical Officer 1971-73; Senior Lecturer in Community Medicine, Nottingham University 1967-71; Special Professor of Health Care Planning 1974-97; Regional Medical Officer, Trent Regional Health Authority 1973-88; FRCP 1985; CBE 1986; Professor Associate in Health Service Planning, Sheffield University 1988-97; married 1957 Margaret Stinger (one son, two daughters); died Sheffield 7 May 1997.

Bunny Roger

Only brief mention of Bunny Roger's war service was made in Clive Fisher's admirable and sympathetic obituary (29 April), writes Raleigh Trevelyan. We Riflemen were often told of Bunny's great courage under fire, and how for instance he dragged a wounded fellow of-

ficer from a burning building, that had been bombed.

One story may be apocryphal. When Bunny's sergeant told him that the Germans were advancing and asked what should be done, Bunny is said to have replied: "When in doubt, powder heavily".

Gift failed because condition was not met

LAW REPORT

14 May 1997

Ellis v The Chief Adjudication Officer: Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Staughton, Lord Justice Onion and Lord Justice Schiemann) 8 May 1997

Where a property was transferred by deed of gift on condition that the transferee would care for the transferor in the property, the condition was not void for uncertainty. Since, however, the condition was not fulfilled, the gift failed and the transferee held the property on trust for the transferor, who was consequently not eligible for income support.

The Court of Appeal upheld the decision of a Social Security Commissioner, rejecting the appellant's claim for income support.

The appellant transferred her flat to her daughter by a deed of gift, on condition that her daughter would look after her in the flat, and pay off the mortgage. The daughter was registered as owner of the property and duly paid off the mortgage, but evicted the appellant from the flat.

The appellant's claim for income support was rejected by

an adjudication officer. Her appeals to the Appeal Tribunal and the Social Security Commissioner were dismissed. *Lorna Findlay (Ward & Griffiths, Nottingham) for the appellant; Timothy Mould (Solicitor, Department of Social Security) for the Chief Adjudication Officer.*

Lord Justice Staughton said that the commissioner had found that the transfer of the property was a gift subject to a condition subsequent, namely that the appellant's daughter would look after her in the flat. That condition had not been fulfilled and the gift had, consequently, failed, so that the daughter held the property on trust for the appellant.

He had found, accordingly, that the appellant was not entitled to income support, since her capital exceeded the amount prescribed by regulation 45 of the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987 as amended.

The question arose whether

the condition that the appellant's daughter care for her in the flat was void for uncertainty. If it were, it would promote the appellant's claim for income support, but it would also follow that she would be unable to recover the proceeds of sale of the flat from her daughter.

The wider implications of such a decision were a cause of great concern. There must be many elderly parents who parted with their property to their children on assurances such as that given to the appellant.

In his Lordship's judgment the condition could fairly be construed as requiring the daughter to allow the appellant to live in the flat for as long as it was reasonably practicable for her to do so, and to see that she was provided, for payment if required, with the basic necessities of life. Such a term had sufficient certainty to ensure that it was valid and effective.

It was then necessary to decide the value of the flat,

There was a dispute as to what was required to be valued by regulation 49 of the amended Regulations with regard to the cost of realising the appellant's beneficial interest. Was it the flat, or the beneficial interest in the flat in the appellant's hands? If the latter view were correct, it was said that the court would have to envisage the appellant going to an estate agent and offering her, presumably disputed, beneficial interest for sale. Would anyone buy it all, or for at least £6,000?

It was doubtful whether so complicated a calculation was required by the regulation.

The right course was to make some deduction for the costs likely to be incurred in realising the asset. That was what the commissioner had done in the present case. He had concluded that there would in any event remain more than £6,000, which was the relevant capital limit under regulation 45 at the time. That was a conclusion of fact with which the court could not interfere.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

COLBECK: Marjorie Helen, known to many as the artist Marjorie Irvine. Suddenly, on 9 May, at Colchester, aged 85. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Family flowers only, but donations for St Helen's Hospice, Enquiries to R. Gwynell & Sons, Colchester, 01206 868585.

STUMSON: On 9 May, Carol Ann, of Nottm, York, wife of Jonathan Bradshaw, mother to Mare and Tom, grandmother to Aidan, stepmother to Nicho, Lucy and Ben. Most dearly loved. Funeral service to be held at St Helen's Parish Church, Stillingfleet, York, on Friday 16 May at 1pm, followed by private cremation. Floral tributes may be sent to the Cooperative Funeral Service, Cromwell Road, York, telephone 01904 639366.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at 66.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette notices (necrologies, funerals, marriages, divorces, obituaries, etc.) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Birthdays

Miss Francesca Annis, actress, 52; Mr Richard Balle, MEP, 53; Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, former president of Malawi, 92; Mrs Hazel Blears MP, 41; Mr Clay Blyth, yachtman, 57; Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Buchanan, 72; Mr Denis Cannan, playwright, 78; Mr Phil Drabble, television commentator, 83; Mr Michael Fallon MP, 45; Sir Owen Green, former chairman, BTR, 72; Baroness Hogg, economist, 51; Mr David Hubbard, chairman, London and Manchester Group, 61; Mr Peter Kirsten, cricketer, 42; Mr Geoffrey Lister, joint vice-chairman, Bradford & Bingley Building Society, 60; Lord McAlpine of West Green, former director, Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons, 55; Mr Edward Newman, MEP, 44; Canon John Oates, rector, St Bride's, Fleet Street, 67; Mr Robert A. Parker, watercolour artist, 71; Miss Siân Phillips, actress, 63; Sir Peregrine Rhodes, former diplomat, 72; Sir Adam Ridley, executive director, Hambros Bank, 59; Sir Leslie Sharp, former chief constable, Strathclyde, 61; Mrs Patricia Turner, former trade union leader,

70; Mrs Adrienne Uzziel-Hamilton, circuit judge, 65; Mr Bob Woolmer, cricketer, 48.

Anniversaries

Births: Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre, 1533; Thomas Gainsborough, painter, baptised 1727; Sir Squire Bancroft, actor and manager, 1847; Otto Klemperer, conductor, 1885. **Deaths:** August Strindberg, playwright, 1912; James Gordon Bennett, newspaper proprietor, 1918; Henry John Heinz, food manufacturer, 1919; Sir Henry Rider Haggard, novelist, 1925; Billie Burke (Mary William Ethelbert Appleton Burke), actress, 1970; Jean Rhys (Williams), novelist, 1979. On this day: Louis XIV became king of France at the age of four, 1643; Edward Jenner was successful in his first public vaccination experiment, 1796; in Palestine, the British mandate ended and Israel was proclaimed an independent state, 1948. Today is the Feast Day of St Carthage the Younger, St Erembert, St Mary Mazzarello, St Manhius, St Michael Garicouts and St Pontius of Cineiz.

Lectures

National Gallery: Colin Wiggins, "Seldon Seca (II): Rens and Studio, The Toilet of Venus", 1pm; David Bomford, "Impressionist Trajectories" (Slide Lecture), 6.30pm; Victoria and Albert Museum: Laurence Mangin, "Fashion on Both Sides of the Channel 1930-60", 2.30pm.

Tate Gallery: Catherine Lever, "The Sublime and its Place in Modernity: Turner, Marlin, Whistler and Rothko", 1pm.

Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire: Rosamund Griffin, "Housekeeping at Waddesdon: respecting the past, working for the future", 11am.

Receptions

RM Government
Mr Nigel Griffiths MP, Minister for Competition and Consumer Affairs, was the host at a reception held yesterday at Lancaster House, St James's, London SW1, on the occasion of the 1997 meeting of the ISO Committee on Consumer Policy.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 14 Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 4pm.

Princess Alexandra visits the ISS (International Social Service of the United Kingdom) International Spring Fair at Kensington Town Hall, London W8.

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J. Reberwaldt Sub Prime Mktg	748.5	213.0	San Life Can Eastern Mktg	718.3	151.0
Lawrence Penson Mktg	345.2	383.1	San Life Can Maple Leaf Acc	437.4	750.1
Lawrence Mktg Int'l Acc	678.7	71.2	San Life Can Maple Leaf Mktg	497.6	883.1
Lawrence Mktg Int'l Acc	682.0	80.4	139 Equity	497.6	
Legal & General Equity Acc	124.4	189.0	139 Hantebuyer	292.8	
Legal & General International Acc	602.6	237.7	139 Managed	328.8	266.1

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UNIT TRUST GUIDE	
d	ex dividend
a	exit charge applies
	when units are sold
buy	formerly 'offer'
sell	formerly 'bid'
x	Non SIB recognised funds

business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Bank warns of need for tight Budget

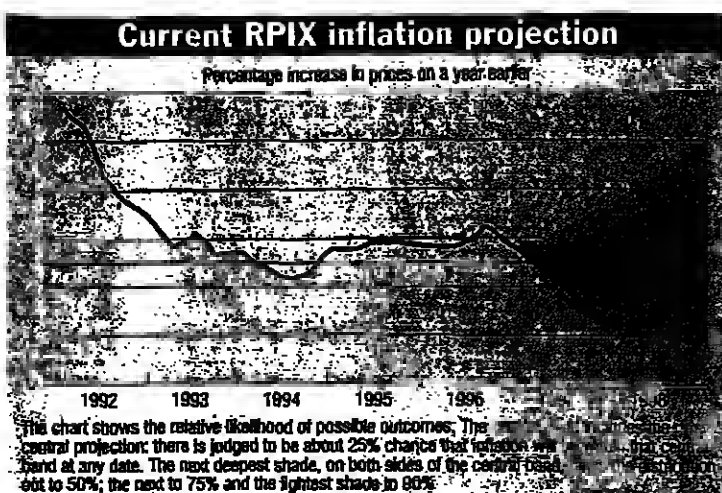
Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The Bank of England warned yesterday, in its first inflation report since gaining independence, of the need for tighter policy to keep inflation on target in the longer term. The report was widely seen in the City as a warning that the newly liberated Bank would raise interest rates again during the next few months unless the Chancellor increased taxes in the Budget.

"They have given Gordon Brown a breathing space, but the message is fairly explicit. If he fails to deliver in the Budget, they will push up interest rates," said Jonathan Loyes at HSBC Markets.

David Bloom at James Capel agreed. "It is all in central bank language, but the signal could not have been more blatant," he said.

And Richard Fley at Hoare Govett



said: "The Bank is clearly giving the Chancellor the chance to limit the scope of rate rises by producing a tight Budget."

Share prices set a new record yesterday, with the FTSE 100 index up more than 21 points at 4,691. But the Bank's message got the blame for

knocking it below the 4,700 level it had breached earlier in the day.

The inflation report predicted that underlying inflation will fall below the 2.5 per cent target this year but would be approaching 3 per cent by the end of 1998. It admitted that the contrast between buoyant domestic demand and the likely impact on exports of the strong pound meant the recovery had become unbalanced.

It concluded that there was a policy dilemma: "Higher interest rates would dampen domestic demand, but if they led to a further appreciation of sterling, would worsen the imbalance."

Last week Eddie George, the Bank's Governor, said during a briefing about its new freedom to set interest rates: "Other things equal, if you tighten fiscal policy you would expect that to lead to lower monetary growth and lower inflation."

Mervyn King, the Bank's chief economist, would not comment directly on the Budget yesterday, saying there was no simple trade-off between fiscal and monetary policy. But he said the imbalance between different sectors of the economy was a matter for concern.

He said the short-term outlook for inflation was very favourable, as it should be with such a strong exchange rate. But he added that, despite last week's quarter-point rise in interest rates, it was still more likely than not that inflation would be above target two years hence.

Gordon Brown is due to restate the inflation target in next month's Mansion House speech. It will be at least as tough as the current "2.5 per cent or less", the Chancellor has pledged, but there is speculation that the target could take the form of a range instead.

The new Monetary Policy Committee, which will be the forum

within the Bank for interest rate decisions, would decide when and how much rates should move month by month, Mr King said yesterday.

The inflation report listed strong consumer demand, the acceleration in monetary growth, cost pressures in services and the tighter labour market as reasons for concern about the longer-term inflation outlook.

Figures due today are expected to show another big monthly drop in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit.

The TUC yesterday urged the Government to introduce a new measure of unemployment to replace the monthly claimant count of the number of unemployment benefit claimants. It called instead for a monthly survey measuring all those looking for work in the previous four weeks, regardless of whether they qualify for benefit.

Regardless of such doubts about the

statistics, most economists accept that unemployment is falling rapidly.

However, today's figures are not expected to show a further pick-up in earnings growth, while retail price figures tomorrow are likely to show a small decline in the underlying rate. Simon Briscoe at Nikko Europe said: "The inflation situation is not serious."

He suggested the Bank could afford to take a relaxed attitude for now. The Treasury said yesterday that it would consult gilts market participants about the planned switch of responsibility for the sale of gilts and management of government debt from the Bank to the Treasury. The move would be implemented as early as feasible after the end of July.

Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, said utilities would have to submit their representations about the planned windfall tax by the end of this month.

Comment, page 19

Allied issues
threat over
Guinness dealNigel Cope
and Magnus Grimond

Allied Domecq, the Beefeater gin and Ballantine's Scotch group, yesterday warned that it would make a formal complaint to the competition authorities if it felt that the proposed £24bn merger between Guinness and Grand Metropolitan gave the enlarged group an unfair dominance in any of its markets. The company has set up a task force to consider the matter.

Though Allied Domecq's chairman, Sir Christopher Hogg, was keen to play down the possible impact of the deal yesterday, he said: "If there is a regulatory issue in particular markets then we will have a duty to make a complaint. But it is much too early to predict what will happen. The jury is out."

The company's low-key approach contrasts with a strong attack launched on Monday by Seagram, the Canadian spirits group which owns the Chivas Regal and Murran's champagne brands. It said the deal raised "serious anti-trust issues" in the US, Europe and elsewhere. It is understood the company may consider legal action to stop the deal.

There was speculation yesterday that prior to the announcement of the GrandMet deal, Guinness had been talking to Bacardi about a possible link-up. That deal would have given Guinness the world's leading brand of spirit to link with its existing top 10 brands. Johnnie Walker Scotch and Gordon's gin, Guinness said it did not comment on market rumours though one insider said the link-up was unlikely.

UK retailers as well as pub and brewing groups remain relaxed about the possible implications of the Guinness-Grand Met deal even though the new company will have huge market shares in certain markets, particularly in Scotch and gin. Whitebread, Bass and Sainsbury's all said the UK impact would be minimal.

In Scotland, the largest whisky union, GMB Scotland, will today demand that United Distillers honour its agreement of long-term employment security if Guinness, its parent company, completes the merger. Guinness recently renewed a job security deal covering 3,000 unionised members of its 4,250-strong Scottish workforce, preventing compulsory redundancies until 1999.

Harry Donaldson, of GMB Scotland, said: "All too often mergers are about rationalisations and redundancy. The whisky industry especially has had more than its share of morale-sapping cut-backs. We want a merger with a difference - for growth and jobs."

Other reaction from north of the border was muted. George Reid, the Scottish National Party's trade and industry spokesman said they were "reasonably comfortable" with the prospect of growth in developing markets such as the Far East. However, he warned they would seek assurances on jobs.

Allied Domecq declined to say whether it planned to lobby the Government to have the merger ruled upon by the British competition authorities rather than those in Brussels. Allied's shares rose 17p to 463.5p yesterday in spite of a flat set of profit figures as City analysts cited it as a takeover target. However, Tony Hales, chief executive, dismissed suggestions that the creation of such a dominant number one player in GMG Brands would force Allied to strike a deal itself. "Everybody wants to be number one. But we're damned happier to be number two than number five or six. And that is where the real squeeze is going to be."

Allied Domecq's problems were further highlighted yesterday when it announced a modest 3 per cent increase in half-year profits to £317m and a maintained interim dividend of 9.44p.



Changing tracks: (from left) Brian Cox, chairman of South West Trains; Brian Souter, chairman of Stagecoach; Peter Murray, managing director of GEC Alsthom Transport; and Peter Rigby, marketing and sales director at GEC Alsthom, announcing the deal

South West Trains, the heavily criticised commuter railway, said yesterday it may have to start rehiring drivers after announcing a £30m bid to buy 30 new trains from GEC Alsthom, writes Michael Harrison.

It was SWT's decision to axe 10 per cent of its drivers earlier this year that forced it to cancel hundreds of services a week and brought the threat of a £1m fine from the rail franchising director.

But Brian Cox, chairman of SWT, said that when the new rolling stock began to arrive in two years' time the company

South West Trains to hire
drivers after £90m order

possibly would need to take on more drivers. He said that might sound crazy after the crisis SWT had been plunged into but its parent company, Stagecoach, had a similar experience in the bus industry when it took over local operators, cutting staff and then increasing them.

The trains will be leased through

another Stagecoach subsidiary, Portbrook Leasing, and will enter service on the Reading-Waterloo line, replacing 30-year-old slam-door rolling stock.

The order, the biggest since the rail industry was privatised, will safeguard up to 1,600 jobs at GEC Alsthom's Metro-Cammell works in Birmingham.

The order was over and above the commitments Stagecoach gave when it won the franchise last year and will be followed up by further improvements to stations and existing rolling stock for the 150,000 passengers that SWT carries each day.

Mr Cox said a "thick black line" had been drawn under SWT's well-publicised problems. Although SWT believed the regulatory regime had sufficient teeth, it would work with whatever extra demands Labour chose to impose on the privatised train operators.

BAA to boost investment in property

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

BAA, the owner of Heathrow and Gatwick airports, is embarking on a big expansion of its property business which could see investment in rented office space and other airline-related buildings quadruple to £400m over the next three years.

Another option being considered by BAA to unlock value for shareholders is a flotation of its fast-growing discount shopping centre operation, jointly owned with US factory

mall specialist McArthur-Glen, which could take place as early as next year.

Sir John Egan, BAA's chief executive, has backed the surge in property spending following the upturn in demand for office accommodation from airlines and the huge increase in rental charges in central London.

Property has become increasingly important to BAA's profits, already accounting for about 30 per cent of the group's earnings of £397m in the nine months to the end of December, though only some 17 per

cent of turnover. "This really is one of the areas of the business the City hasn't fully understood, but we are starting to change that," said Gordon Edgington, group property director.

Though most of the new development will initially be concentrated on Heathrow, the additional investment will also see a similar growth spurt in Stansted. One advantage is the low cost of land on the periphery of airports compared with city centre sites.

The first step has been to commission a second phase of

the BAA's World Business Centre at Heathrow at a cost of £8m. Mr Edgington yesterday confirmed that total property investment would double to around £200m over the next three years, while Sir John is understood to be interested in raising it even further. Mr Edgington said existing property investments were earning a 15 per cent return.

The possible flotation of BAA McArthur-Glen, a separate division to the main property interests, underlines the success of the American dis-

count shopping mall concept in the UK. Clothing and other manufacturers use the space to sell selected stock, often from last year's range, at sale prices.

Three centres have been completed in Cheshire, Tyneside in France and Swindon. Mr Edgington said four more malls were in the pipeline, three in the UK and one in Austria. Some £150m will be invested over the next three years.

Subject to approval from McArthur-Glen, BAA would consider floating the business if its value reached £400m.

SIB calls
for quick
redress on
pensionsNic Cicutti
Personal Finance Editor

The Personal Investment Authority, the financial regulator, yesterday gave its members up to 18 months' further grace finally to resolve the pensions mis-selling scandal, as it admitted that its long-running review had been painfully slow to date.

The PIA's latest deadlines came as the Securities and Investments Board, the senior City regulator, backed calls for victims of the scandal to be offered "guarantees" of compensation to speed up the process.

Sir Andrew Large, chairman of the SIB, yesterday called on companies simply to concede that their clients had been misled and pension winding-up through further detailed calculations.

He said: "Firms should consider the advantages of avoiding unnecessarily detailed reviews of every case and simply accept that many of their investors who opted out of, or failed to join, their occupational pension scheme will have suffered loss." His comments were welcomed by Prudential and Pearl, which said they had been investigating claims with a similar attitude for some time.

Sir Andrew said SIB's backing for long-term guarantees - in lieu of paying immediate compensation to policyholders - was not a soft option for companies concerned.

The Association of British Insurers and Legal & General, which have been lobbying for the "guarantee" system, said this would ensure far swifter redress.

The regulator admitted yesterday that out of 500,000 priority cases identified, barely 10 per cent had been assessed by 31 March and compensation offered in just 20,000 instances.

A leaked PIA report in *The Independent* yesterday, showed several of the UK's biggest companies had far worse records, barely paying any compensation at all in some cases.

Interflora torn by thorny question of who's in charge

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

The turmoil at Interflora threatened to turn to farce last night. Having voted in a board of reformers at an extraordinary meeting on Sunday, the association's short-lived flirtation with democracy was in jeopardy following the shelving of a promised postal ballot on the dramatic election of its previous management.

The hunker mentality of the newly installed executives looked likely to be brief, however. It emerged yesterday that friends of the ousted board were moving to raise the support of enough loyalists to insist on a postal vote that would almost certainly put them back in power. A resolution to that effect would require the signatures of only 10 per cent of the association's 2,600 florists.

At the heart of the row that has split the 74-year-old flower delivery association is an arcane voting rule that allowed its management to be thrown out of office at the weekend by a simple majority of votes at an extraordinary meeting packed with rebels. The board was narrowly shown the door by a minority of members for attempting to push through controversial proposals to change membership

subscriptions and convert the association into a plc.

In a memo to its members issued last night, Interflora's new chairman Geoff Hughes adopted a defensive tone: "The six directors elected at Sunday's egm have been appointed for a period of 6 months. And I would like to make it clear that the appointments are legally valid and have not been challenged in any way."

He went on to say: "Legal implications concerning the possibility of a postal vote are receiving our attention but there is no immediate urgency in this matter. We very much regret the unsettling effect that this is having on some of you."

The upheavals at Interflora head office in Sleaford, left one of the association's best known names bemused yesterday. Richard Felton, whose grandfather was one of the original 16 florists who created Interflora in 1923, said from his Canary Wharf shop: "The one thing that's clear is that the service is heading for a rather large legal bill. On the evidence given, the mid- to long-term benefits of the proposed changes looked attractive. What was less attractive was the Gestapo-style do-as-you're-told approach of the old board."

Airbus 'faces
death warrant'

Michael Harrison

The chairman of Aerospatiale, the French aerospace group, yesterday launched an astonishing attack on its British and German partners in Airbus, warning they could be signing the consortium's "death warrant" by joining a bid for the French defence electronics giant Thomson-CSF.

Yves Michot caused dismay in London and Bonn with his remarks which contained a veiled threat that the restructuring of Airbus into a public company would not go ahead if the Thomson bid were successful. British Aerospace, which has a 20 per cent stake in Airbus, and Germany's Daimler-Benz Aerospace (Dasa), which has a 37.9 per cent holding, have teamed up with Lagardere, owner of the Matra missiles group, to bid for the French government's 58 per cent holding in Thomson.

The Aerospatiale chairman said in that case it would be necessary to think of a different solution for Airbus, based on a limited partnership or making it one industrial operation. In particular Dasa's decision to link up with Lagardere had ended a "shared global vision" between the German group and Aerospatiale which dated back 30 years. The two companies are also partners in the Eurocopter and Euromissile consortia.

Aerospatiale, France's biggest aerospace group with interests ranging from commercial airliners and missiles to helicopters and regional jets, has been blocked from bidding. However, the French military aircraft group, Dassault, which with

Aerospatiale plans to merge before its own privatisation later this year, has been permitted to bid for Thomson in partnership with Alcatel Alsthom.

In an interview with the French financial newspaper *Les Echos*, Mr Michot said that if the Lagardere-Bae-Daimler consortium was successful it would weaken the French aerospace industry and make it impossible to carry out the reorganisation of Airbus, which is due to convert to plc status in 1999.

He warned Bae and Dasa against any attempt to marginalise Aerospatiale within the consortium, adding: "To ally against Aerospatiale would be to signal the death of Airbus."

Comment, page 19

STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100			Dow Jones			Nikkei			
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield (%)	Index	Close	Day's change
FTSE 100	4691.00	+21.40	+0.5	4691.00	4558.80	3.46	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
FTSE 250	4533.00	+8.60	+0.1	4729.40	4469.40	3.58	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
FTSE 350	2271.60	+8.60	+0.4	2271.60	2017.90	3.48	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
FTSE SmallCap	2917.81	+3.77	+0.2	2917.81	2178.29	3.01	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
FTSE All-Share	2230.66	+8.47	+0.4	2230.66	1989.78	3.45	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
New York	7301.82	+8.07	+0.1	7292.75	5032.94	1.71	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
Tokyo	20129.11	-14.40	-0.1	20180.92	17303.85	0.81	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
Hong Kong	12906.46	-81.34	-0.6	12987.80	12065.17	3.07	Index	12,000.00	+100.00
Frankfurt	3595.15	+19.78	+0.6	3595.15	2848.77	1.52	Index	12,000.00	+100.00

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling			UK medium gilt			US long bond			
3m	5.75	5.75	3m	5.75	5.75	10y	6.75	6.75	6.75
6m	5.75	5.75	6m	5.75	5.75	20y	6.75	6.75	6.75
1y	5.75	5.75	1y	5.75	5.75	30y	6.75	6.75	6.75
2y	5.75	5.75	2y	5.75	5.75				
3y	5.75	5.75	3y	5.75	5.75				
4y	5.75	5.75	4y	5.75	5.75				
5y	5.75	5.75	5y	5.75	5.75				
6y	5.75	5.75	6y	5.75	5.75				
7y	5.75	5.75	7y	5.75	5.75				
8y	5.75	5.75	8y	5.75	5.75				
9y	5.75	5.75	9y	5.75	5.75				
10y	5.75	5.75	10y	5.75	5.75				

CURRENCIES									
£/\$			£/DM			£/¥			
Yesterday	1.6319	+0.012	1.5147	Yesterday	0.6128	-0.27	0.0005	Yesterday	163.19
1 Month	1.6335	+1.006	1.5144	1 Month	0.6122	-0.38	0.0003	1 Month	163.19
3 Months	1.6387	+0.860	2.3220	3 Months	0.6101	-0.320	1.5336	3 Months	163.19
6 Months	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	6 Months	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	6 Months	163.19
1 Year	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	1 Year	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	1 Year	163.19
2 Year	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	2 Year	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	2 Year	163.19
3 Year	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	3 Year	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	3 Year	163.19
4 Year	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	4 Year	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	4 Year	163.19
5 Year	1.6419	+0.835	1.5835	5 Year	0.6080	-0.305	1.5470	5 Year	163.19

OTHER INDICATORS									
Oil Brent \$			Gold \$			Base Rates			
Yesterday	18.65	+0.16	19.32	Yesterday	348.15	-1.9	391.40	Yesterday	6.25pc
1 Month	18.65	+0.16	19.32	1 Month	348.15	-1.9	391.40	1 Month	6.25pc
3 Months	18.65	+0.16	19.32	3 Months	348.15	-1.9	391.40	3 Months	6.25pc
6 Months	18.65	+0.16	19.32	6 Months	348.15	-1.9	391.40	6 Months	6.25pc
1 Year	18.65	+0.16	19.32	1 Year	348.15	-1.9	391.40	1 Year	6.25pc
2 Year	18.65	+0.16	19.32	2 Year	348.15	-1.9	391.40	2 Year	6.25pc
3 Year	18.65	+0.16	19.32	3 Year	348.15	-1.9	391.40	3 Year	6.25pc
4 Year	18.65	+0.16	19.32	4 Year	348.15	-1.9	391.40	4 Year	6.25pc
5 Year	18.65	+0.16	19.32	5 Year	348.15	-1.9	391.40	5 Year	6.25pc

Budget



It would make a mockery of the move to independence if the Bank's new Monetary Policy Committee were to refrain from giving its honest analysis of the economy for fear of trampling on the Chancellor's sensibilities.

Bank freedom points away from boom and bust

Gordon Brown's decision to give the Bank of England operational independence has acquired a small but hardened core of critics who claim it is all a terrible mistake to separate monetary from fiscal policy. The same people will be saying "told you so" now that the Bank has unequivocally indicated that future interest rate moves will depend on what's in the Budget.

In fact, the Inflation Report's expression of concern about the imbalance in the economy, and the corresponding need to use tax rather than interest rate levers to correct it, is no more than most City economists and business organisations have been saying all year. The strength of the pound means there is a real dilemma in relying on monetary policy alone to slow down home demand.

It would make a mockery of the move to independence if the Bank's new Monetary Policy Committee were to refrain from giving its honest analysis of the economy for fear of trampling on the Chancellor's sensibilities. The whole point of the decision was to hand over, subject to proper accountability and transparency, partial control of the economy to people who are not subject to day-to-day political pressures. One of the virtues of Mr Brown's welcome step is precisely that the Bank will police its own tax and spending choices.

As it happens, the Inflation Report's veiled judgement that a tough Budget will do the trick might easily result in the opposite reaction to the one desired. If Gordon

Brown proved himself as virtuous on the fiscal as the monetary front, it might well confirm financial markets in their low affair with the pound, and have the perverse effect of taking the exchange rate even higher.

Even so, freedom for the Bank of England has to mean freedom to say what it thinks about inflation prospects in the broadest sense. Until all the institutional changes are in place, it is impossible to predict how well its relationship with the Chancellor will work. We do not know yet who will be on the new Monetary Policy Committee, or how the feeble Treasury Select Committee will be beefed up to hold it to account, nor precisely what inflation target the Government will set next month. Whatever the answers to these questions, both interest rates and taxes are more likely to be set from now on for the lasting benefit of the economy than in our boom-bust past.

How Arnault could get his own back

Bernard Arnault of LVMH has been left out in the cold in Guinness's proposed merger with Grand Metropolitan; here's how he might get his own back. First, he has to reconcile himself to the fact that his own interests and those of other Guinness shareholders are not the same. His is a quite different agenda to that of other share-

holders. For them, shareholder value is the only game in town. Mr Arnault's interest is a much longer-term and strategic one.

He wants control of Guinness's United Distillers spirits business so that it can be more fully integrated with his own drinks group, M&S Hennessy. The rest of Guinness - its large and profitable brewing interests - is for the birds as far as Mr Arnault is concerned. Temperamentally, as well as culturally and commercially, he is not interested in low-margin, high-volume beer.

If the GrandMet merger goes ahead, he'll have lost the war. His shareholding in Guinness will get diluted down to 7 per cent, he'll get booted off the board, he'll have lost the upper hand in the arrangements M&S already has with United Distillers, and with Guinness sitting there as a 33 per cent shareholder in M&S, he'll be in a bid-or-be-bid-for position with his own company. No wonder he's so opposed to the merger with GrandMet.

The problem is that the alternative he's put forward, a three-way merger between M&S, United Distillers, and GrandMet's spirits division, IDV, is a mission impossible. GrandMet would never contemplate it, nor would this typically Gallic, grand industrial strategy, be likely to deliver the sort of short-term gain Anglo-Saxon investors demand of such things. How then to bring his own interests into line with those of other Guinness shareholders?

By himself he probably lacks the financial fire-power directly to counter the GrandMet

merger with a rival offer for Guinness. But it shouldn't be beyond the wit of clever investment bankers to design a breakup bid for Guinness that would deliver him what he wants while at the same time generating better value for others. A big premium would have to be paid, but as Mr Arnault recently showed with his purchase of Chateau d'Yquem, this is a man prepared to take a very long-term view of these things. With the GrandMet proposal likely to be marooned with the competition authorities for six months or more, he is in with more than a chance; there would be no similar competition concerns raised by a merger of United and M&S. Too ambitious? Possibly, but Mr Arnault is a very ambitious man.

Aerospatiale chief spies another ambush

Paranoid? Moi? When it comes to seeing an ambush around every corner it is hard to beat Yves Michot, chairman of Aerospatiale, the mighty French aerospace group. Mr Michot has spotted British Aerospace and Daimler Benz lining up their sights on Thomson-CSF and fired off a round of chaff to confuse the enemy.

Far from welcoming this fine attempt at constructing a pan-European defence grouping, Mr Michot concludes bizarrely that unless the Brits and the Germans are stopped they will be signing the "death war-

rant" for another example of European collaboration, Airbus Industrie.

Has Mr Michot got his flight controls mixed up? Do Airbus A340s come secretly armed with 20 millimetre cannons? In short, what on earth is the link between the bidding contest for Thomson-CSF, a manufacturer of electronic warfare wizardry, and Airbus Industrie, a manufacturer of commercial jetliners? The answer is there isn't one except that Aerospatiale is involved in the latter (along with B&E and DASA) but it has been excluded from direct involvement in the former. Although M Michot may not put in a bid, Dassault, the company with which Aerospatiale will be merged when it too is privatised has been allowed to tender for Thomson. Hence Mr Michot's Airbus card, designed to disguise what is actually a calculated piece of jingoism designed to appeal to French chauvinism.

Having said that, Mr Michot's bellicose comments serve a dual purpose, which is to throw a spanner in the works as B&E and DASA as Airbus presses ahead with conversion to a plc and an eventual stock market listing. Aerospatiale has always been the least enthusiastic supporter of the plan, seeing it as a rise to diminish French influence over Airbus.

This is not the end of the story. B&E and DASA are vying with Aerospatiale for supremacy when the inevitable consolidation of Europe's aerospace and defence industry takes place. Just because Mr Michot is paranoid, it doesn't mean they are not out to get him.

IN BRIEF

Brussels set to clear BT merger

The European Commission is today expected to clear British Telecom's planned £13bn merger with MCI of the US, subject to agreeing limited undertakings from the group. The EC is thought likely to ask BT to reinforce the transparency of pricing for rival operators using its transatlantic phone cables and ask the two companies to divest MCI's audio-conferencing business in the UK. BT and MCI are still waiting for the US regulator, the Federal Communications Commission, to pass judgement on the deal.

Separately, British Telecom faced another dispute with the telephone watchdog, Ofcom, yesterday over the prices other operators charge to run calls over its network. Doo Cruickshank, the regulator, published price controls which would cut these wholesale charges by 10 per cent to 20 per cent from October and between 6 and 12 per cent each year until 2001.

Ofcom estimated the reduction in the autumn would hit BT's revenues by around £30m. Network charges, paid by other phone companies, account for about £1bn of BT's £12bn annual operating costs. Mr Cruickshank insisted the price controls, to be confirmed in July, were no tougher than the existing regime. BT said if the controls were at the top of the range they could threaten investment in the network.

Shell pledges to stop flares in Nigeria

Shell, the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, launched a pre-emptive defence of its environmental and human rights record in Nigeria before today's annual general meeting at which it is expected to face a barrage of criticism from shareholders. Brian Anderson, managing director of Shell's Nigerian operation, committed the company to eliminating flares, the result of burning off surplus gas, by 2008.

He admitted production had been hit by recent violence: "We've had some pretty tricky moments over the past two or three weeks." It emerged that some of Shell's installations in the Niger Delta had been invaded by protesters armed with machine guns. Shell's comments came as the world development movement yesterday backed the shareholder resolution by Pire, the pension fund advisory group, condemning Shell's record in Nigeria.

Poor car sales pull down US retail figures

Retail sales in the US fell in April, partly because of weaker demand for new cars. Commerce Department figures yesterday showed that total retail sales declined by 0.3 per cent, the largest drop since June last year, after a revision to show flat sales in March instead of a 0.1 per cent pick-up. Sales of new cars were down 0.9 per cent to a seasonally adjusted \$51.9bn (£31.8bn) following a 0.3 per cent decline in March.

New cars account for about one-quarter of the total. But there were also declines in furniture sales and sales of clothing, food and gasoline. The figures come ahead of next Tuesday's meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee. The Fed raised short-term rates by a quarter point in March, saying strong demand risked triggering inflationary price and wage rises.

Boardroom shuffle at Capital Radio

Capital Radio announced several senior management changes in the wake of its deal to buy Virgin Radio last week. The main board changes involve Richard Eyre, managing director, becoming chief executive; David Mansfield, group commercial director, becoming managing director; and Paul Davies, managing director of media sales and marketing, becoming commercial director, with responsibilities for advertising revenue. The company has also recruited Russell Scott to the new role of chief executive of My Kinda Town, the restaurants group acquired by Capital last year. He will oversee the expansion of the Radio Café into regions where the group owns radio stations.

Zeneca buys crop developer for £46m

Zeneca's plans to become a world leader in genetic crop protection took a step forward with an agreement to pay £46m cash for Mogen, the Dutch group. Zeneca already has 51 per cent acceptance. Mogen, which develops crops resistant to fungal diseases, last year made profits of £67,000 on £4m of sales. The deal doubles Zeneca's small but growing plant science business which includes its highly successful plant fungicide spray, Amistar. The group's shares rose 28p to 1971p.

Applied Distribution agrees £17m bid

Tibbet & Britain, the transport group, made an agreed £16.8m bid for Applied Distribution Group. Terms of the offer are one new Tibbet & Britain share for every 13 Applied Distribution shares. The offer values each Applied Distribution share at 48p. Tibbet & Britain said the bid offered potential earnings enhancement in the medium term. It added, however, that "these statements should not be interpreted to mean that earnings for the current or future years are expected to exceed any specific absolute figure".

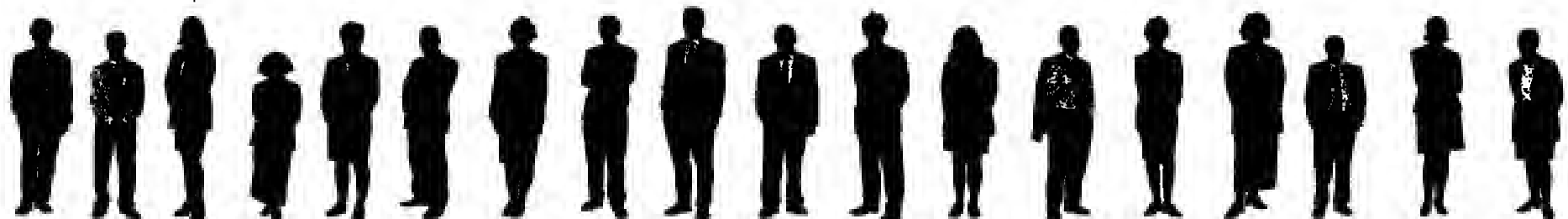
For 1996, Applied Distribution reported pre-tax profits of £280,000 for the year after an exceptional item of £1.5m. This compared with £5.07m of profits it made in 1995. The contract which gave rise to the exceptional item in 1996 continues to perform poorly and is the subject of continuing discussions with the customer.

Rolls-Royce wins \$120m engine order

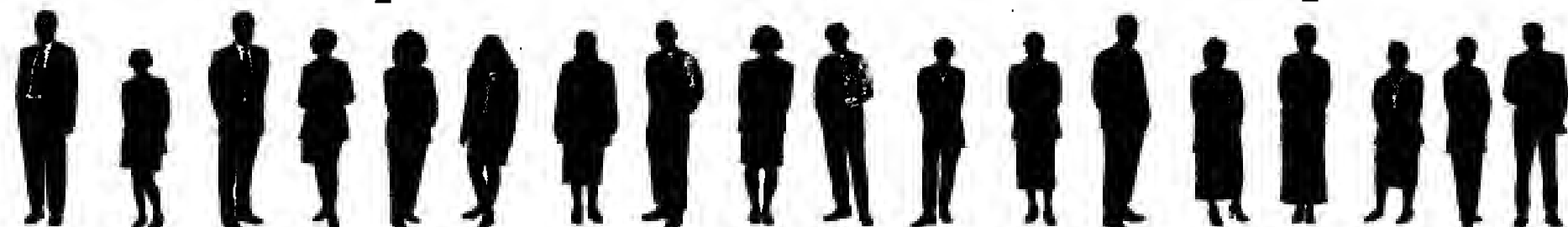
Rolls-Royce said its Allison Engine subsidiary had won an order worth a potential \$120m (£74m) from the Brazilian airline, Rio-Sul Aerias Regionais. The airline has signed a firm purchase order for 40 Embraer EMB-145 regional jets powered by Allison AE300A engines. Allen Novick, Allison's vice president of commercial engines, said the deal opened up an important market.

Correction

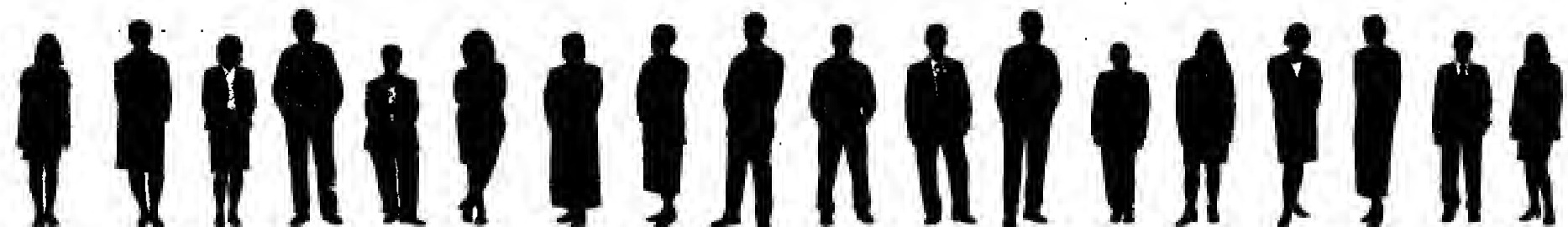
On 24 April, we reported that David Bick, the City PR man, had witnessed the document authorising a £2.4m payment by Andrew Regan's former publicly quoted company, Hobson, to Trellis International, a Cayman Islands registered company controlled by Ronald Zimet. We now accept that our information was wrong and Mr Bick was not a witness to this document.



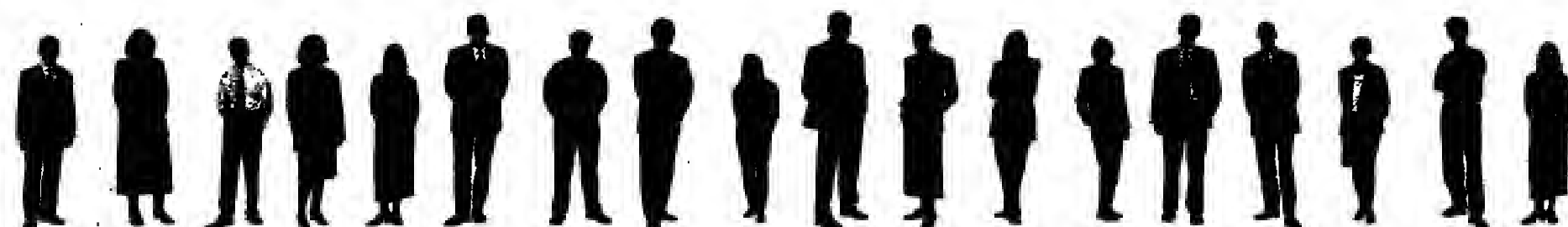
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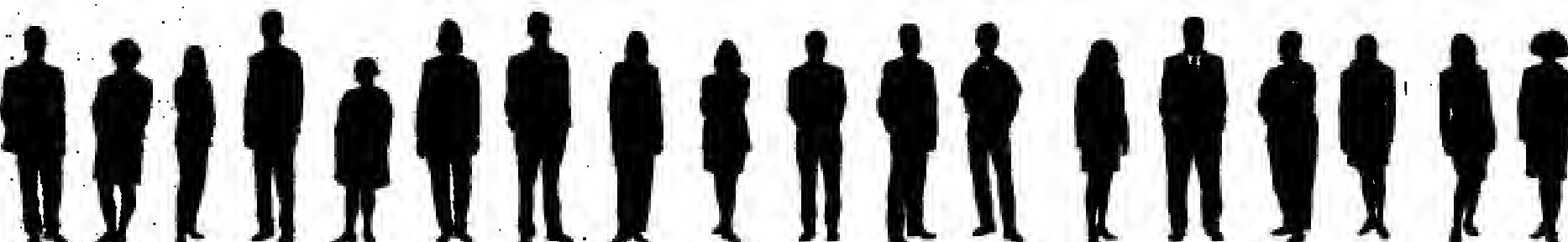
In short, as flying starts go this one can already be said to have taken off.

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cameron mckenna

Not bad for a first day



Kodak improves Danka's image

Danka Business Systems is hardly a household name, even in the City, but that has not stopped it mounting a whirlwind of acquisitions which have transformed a one-time oil and gas company into the world's fourth-largest photocopier distributor. In 10 years the company, led by executive chairman Mark Vaughan-Lee, has made around 140 purchases, culminating last year in the \$688m (£434m) purchase of Eastman Kodak's office imaging division.

That deal was done at below net asset value, but the effects of writing off around £450m in goodwill since 1987 and the huge borrowings taken on with the Kodak deal have left a balance sheet looking like an inverted triangle. Some £524m of net borrowings now teeter on shareholders' funds which were a mere £7.4m in March, down from £11.9m the previous year.

Mr Vaughan-Lee remains unworried by the gravity-defying structure of his balance sheet, pointing to an interest cover of 4.5 times which is set to rise as the group pays down "substantial" amounts of debt. Already, with the acquisition under its belt for only the fourth quarter to March, Danka has repaid around £100m in borrowings from cash flow. It is set to receive another \$86m (£52m) as part of a price adjustment with Kodak.

Kodak has transformed the business. The first results to include the operations yesterday were marred by the £450m cost of integrating acquisitions. Pre-tax profits slumped from £53.9m to £29m in the year to March, hit also by higher finance charges on the increased debt, with the interest bill soaring from £15.3m to £22m.

But profits before exceptional items ahead 23 per cent to £75.2m were well ahead of expectations and the deal has proved earnings-enhancing on an underlying basis. More important is the potential. Having decided to fully integrate the Kodak business, Danka reckons it can squeeze out annual cost savings totalling £100m by the end of the second full year of ownership. The target is to raise meagre operating margins of 2.7 per cent at the time of the purchase to the 9 per cent average for the rest of the group over the next two to three years.

The group has done it before with Infotec Europe, previously its largest acquisition, which has seen margins nearly quadruple to the group average in 18 months or so. But that was a much smaller deal and Danka has suffered hiccups before: last year the shares suffered a 28 per cent one-day fall after it warned that reorganisation in the US would hit profits.

That said, Kodak still looks a good deal, bringing on board stringent financial controls and much faster-selling products. The growth rate for Kodak's high-volume photocopiers at around 7 per cent is several times that

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

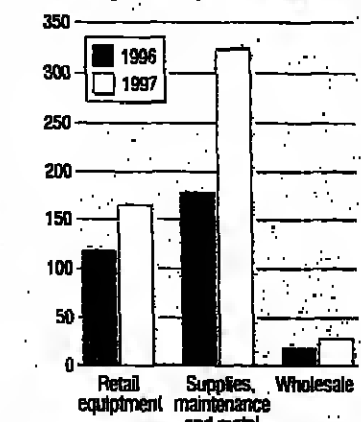
EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

Danka Business Systems: at a glance

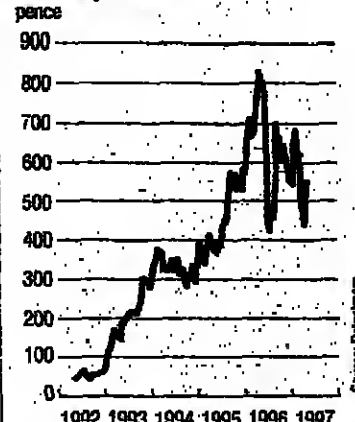
Market value: £1.29bn, share price 567.5p

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Five year record					
Turnover (£m)	188	347	516	705	1,204
Pre-tax profits (£m)	17.5	32.0	45.4	53.9	29.0
Earnings per share (pence)	10.6	11.8	10.8	10.8	9.1
Dividends per share (pence)	1.13	1.5	1.8	2.16	2.6

Gross profit by business (£m)



Share price



for Danka's traditional products and its outsourcing business is in one of the most exciting areas of the market.

Profits of £111m for Danka this year would put the shares, up 20p at 567.5p, on a forward multiple of 17. Fair value.

General Accident pauses for breath

General Accident's shares have been a carefree stock market has abandoned its traditional valuation measures for composite insurers. Historically, Gen-Acc, Commercial Union and Royal Sun Alliance have traded at a discount to net assets to reflect the inherent cyclicity of their underwriting business, but the heavy premiums they all attract now mean the shares have moved into uncharted territory.

First-quarter figures from General Accident yesterday showing an operating profit of £114m were well ahead of expectations and a marked improvement on last year's £55m profit. Star of the show was underwriting, where the

world-wide loss was reduced by £50m in what is traditionally the worst quarter. Producing an underwriting profit of £6m in the home market was an impressive performance unlikely to be matched by CU today or Royal when it reports soon.

What appears to have happened at General Accident is a steady improvement in its ability to interpret the wealth of statistical data that all insurers have at their fingertips, but which they have in the past failed to understand properly. As a result, the group is more selective about unprofitable business, thus bringing the quality of earnings from its general insurance arm closer to that of its long-term life business.

In the latter division, the acquisition last year of Provident Mutual has been absorbed more effectively and quickly than any observers thought likely. With margins on the increase, profits moved usefully ahead from £22m to £32m in the period.

That and a very strong balance sheet mean a forecast 10 per cent dividend rise this year looks achievable, putting the shares, even after their sharp rise, on a prospective yield of 5 per cent.

The income should provide some support for the shares, but valuing General Accident and its peers with confidence

is difficult now the traditional net asset value yardstick has been left behind. On the basis of the 723p NAV announced yesterday, the shares, which closed 5.5p lower at 957.5p, trade at a 32 per cent premium. That compares with a likely premium of about 25 per cent for CU, which arguably should enjoy a higher rating thanks to its bigger life business. After a strong run, the shares are now likely to pause for breath.

BOC chief faces profitability test

Is BOC about to shrug off its big, boring, yet accident-prone image? At least under Danny Rosenkranz, chief executive, the reputation for steady progress marred by unexpected slip-ups is slowly being eradicated. The real test will be whether he can deliver the step change in profitability over the next two years forecast by many analysts, but held back by BOC's heavy capital investment programme.

Yesterday's modest drop in half-yearly profits to £216m, from £217m a year ago, suggested the problem parts of the business have at long last hit bottom. Were it not for the strong pound, which knocked a total of £23m off the bottom line, with £45m expected for the full year, earnings would have risen by more than 6 per cent. On a similar basis, underlying gas profits, which rose just 1 per cent to £199m, would have increased by 9 per cent.

Unlike the damage being sustained at British Steel and ICI, the kind of hit from sterling experienced by BOC is pretty limited and mostly due to the effect of translating earnings from overseas currencies into sterling, rather than a genuine impact in cash terms. The fear is that sterling could have a longer-term effect on the group by depressing demand from manufacturing industry for industrial gases. Thus far this has been offset by growth overseas.

Mr Rosenkranz said demand from his customers was flatish, but did not see things getting any worse. News from the once fast-growing vacuum pump operations was more encouraging. Despite a 20 per cent fall in operating profits to £24.9m and a drop in export margins as a result of the exchange rate, there are signs of a slow recovery. Which leaves healthcare, another exporting division hit by sterling, where profits fell 8 per cent to £26.1m. The big concern is the decision by the Food and Drug Administration, the US drug regulator, to extend the patent on Zeneca's rival anaesthetic drug. This was disappointing and has yet to make its impact on the figures.

A full-year profits forecast of £450m leaves the shares, up 9.5p at 984.5p, on a prospective p/e ratio of 16. Worth hanging on.

The bank that likes to say: Yes, ex-minister

David Howell has become the first former senior Tory MP to get a City job since the election - as advisory director of SBC Warburg. The former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee has been canny than his colleagues - he announced he would not be standing for re-election back in April and thus escaped being tainted by defeat.

"I've been a member of SBC's international board of advisers for 10 years," says Mr Howell, who swaps his occasional brief for a full time job which will involve a huge amount of globe-trotting. He will be using his experience as Minister for Energy (1979-81) and for Transport (1981-83) to seek out deals and mandates in emerging markets.

"I thought after 31 years in Parliament it was time to move on. Before I announced [I was standing down] I got this job and things moved together," he says. This puts Mr Howell in a far cosier position than the members of the Cabinet who fought to the end and are now getting a distinctly lukewarm response from City headhunters.

He admits to some sympathy for "the saddest cases who didn't plan to move" from government. Does he know if any former colleagues are having luck with their job searches? "I don't know - although I don't want to seem to sound distant from colleagues who have found themselves outside Parliament, perhaps unplanned."

Simon Lewis, head of communications at Centrica, was pleased as punch on Monday night. As President of the Institute for Public Relations he had the honour of presenting an achievement medal to George Stephanopoulos, Bill Clinton's former director of communications who steered Clinton to his 1992 election victory.

Mr Lewis tells me of the incident: "It enabled him to utter those immortal words to me, 'Thank you, Mr President.' Now I can die a happy man."

Impressively, Charles Anson, head of PR at GrandMet, also managed to make it to the bash, fresh from briefing the press on the proposed £200m merger with Guinness.

Is the new Government too paranoid about releasing information? City economists certainly think so. The teenage scribbles have been in the habit of ringing the Treasury press office for the clarification of policy details or interpretations of economic statistics.

But some who telephoned last Tuesday to discuss the finer points of Gordon Brown's announcement that he was making the Bank of England independent were redirected to the public enquiries department for the first time. The paper-shufflers there were not even aware that there had been an announcement. This particular episode of Whitehall bungling did not go down well in the Square Mile.

David Kendall, the recently installed chairman of Wagon Industrial Holdings, has lured Nick Brayshaw from Caradon to be its new chief executive. Mr Brayshaw will certainly have his work cut out. Wagon issued a profits warning in March, and the auto-parts maker was in the

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



Snapped up: David Howell has done better than colleagues who stayed on for defeat

throes of a restructuring when former chairman Paul Taylor and chief executive John Hudson left the company.

Mr Kendall says: "We will be saying a lot more about the restructuring with our preliminary figures in July. We aim to narrow the focus and become a more high-quality engineering group. I see Nick as the man to build a strong future for the group."

Mr Brayshaw, 41, is also a regular runner in the London Marathon. "With the weight of the job he's facing that might have to go," warns the chairman.

James Noble, who in February unexpectedly quit his job as finance director of British Biotech, leaving behind share option profits of £2.8m, is to become a non-executive director at Oxford GlycoSciences.

This is the second non-exec position Mr Noble has picked up since February, the other being Innovative Technologies Group. While many observers expected the former Kleinwort Benson corporate financier to go for another big job, he seems happier to collect non-exec jobs and tend his bank balance.

And what a balance it is. Mr Noble and other directors of British Biotech caused a rumour two years ago when they exercised options after the shares had shot up on the back of early results for an anti-cancer drug. Mr Noble made £1.7m on that deal and exercised further options which netted him another £2.5m.

A spokesman for Mr Noble says there was no falling out with the British Biotech management, rather that he lost a bit of his interest in the group once it got the £143m right issue away last year.

John Willcock

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Saudi Prince buys into Cordiant

Cathy Newman

Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, the Saudi Arabian multi-billionaire, yesterday added to his string of high profile investments by taking a stake of slightly more than 3 per cent in Cordiant, the advertising and marketing group.

The Prince - who only last month took a 1 per cent share of Planet Hollywood - bought 13.3 million shares in Cordiant, which plans to demerge into two parts later this year. Cordiant's shares firmed 1.5p to 129.5p yesterday.

The City appeared bemused by the move, with one analyst viewing it as "a bit of a game" for the Prince, who is seen as an interested but passive investor

in media companies. Another said he was "a shrewd guy" who could take a bigger stake in one of Cordiant's international agencies, Bates Worldwide or Saatchi & Saatchi, after the demerger. However, an outright bid for any part of the company is seen as highly unlikely.

A spokesman for Cordiant pointed to the Prince's business links with the company, describing him as "a valued client" of Saatchi & Saatchi in the Middle East. He added that the Prince was supportive of the demerger and of management plans for the company. "The Prince is a renowned investor. Welcome aboard," he said.

Prince al-Waleed, who is estimated to be worth around \$12bn (£7.5bn), has a diverse

portfolio of business interests. He has stakes in Canary Wharf, London, the Apple Computer group, Citicorp, Euro Disney, Sals Fifth Avenue, George V in Paris, Mediaset and the Four Seasons. He also has a joint venture with Michael Jackson in Kingdom Entertainment, a global entertainment company launched last year.

Derek Terrington, media analyst at Teather & Greenwood, said the market had not been over-excited by the Prince's investment: "The market isn't betting on anything momentous. It's possible the process of demerging needs some kind of backing."

When Cordiant announced its demerger last month, the City was sceptical, viewing the

plans as an admission that the holding company had ceased to add value. The company had fallen from favour since a shareholder revolt led to the departure of the founding Saatchi brothers, Maurice and Charles, two years ago. Cordiant has struggled to overcome the client losses that followed in the wake of the brothers' defection.

There has been widespread expectation that Bates and Saatchi would be subject to bid speculation, but it is likely any bids would need agreement from the agencies' clients.

Following the demerger - which is likely to take effect in December - Bates and Saatchi will have a 50 per cent stake in the media buying company, Zenith Media.

Profits rise 71% at Westbury Homes

Magnus Grimond

Westbury Homes, the Cheltenham-based householder, added to signs of a reviving housing market with news of an underlying 71 per cent rise in profits for last year and a strong start to the current period.

The company's shares added 11p to 264.5p after Geoffrey Maddrell, chairman, said: "The new year has... begun well in an improved market place. Our aim is to increase profitability through a focus on improved operating efficiencies rather than higher volumes."

Analysts welcomed the group's concentration on financial goals rather than just growth for its own sake. Robin Hardy at the company's brokers,

Pannure Gordon, described the results as excellent.

He said the company was now focused on the right measures, such as conserving capital and higher returns, rather than just the size of the land bank and plot volumes. He has raised his forecast for the current year from £25.7m to £27.2m.

That forecast compares with pre-tax profits of £22.6m for the period to February reported yesterday, up from £11.5m in 1996, a figure depressed by a £1.7m restructuring charge for the acquisition of Clarke Homes.

The figures were boosted by the first full year's inclusion of Clarke, formerly the house-building arm of the BICC cables group, acquired for £60.7m at the end of 1995.

Cortecs in brittle bone advance

Sameera Ahmad

Cortecs International yesterday took a step closer to launching the world's first pill for brittle bone disease. Shares in the drug delivery and diagnostics group jumped 10 per cent to 268.5p after it announced positive results from an eagerly awaited study on its osteoporosis treatment, Macritonin.

Cortecs plans to use the three-month data, part of an ongoing two-year trial, to register the drug for approval in Europe. Analysts expect a launch in Europe by the year-end. Trials in the US are about two years behind.

The best existing treatments for brittle bone disease are injected or nasal forms of calcitonin. However, no one has yet been able to make a more user-friendly pill version to treat the illness, which affects around 200 million people worldwide.

Glen Travers, chairman, said that that an effective calcitonin pill could decimate rivals' share of the nasal and injectable market, worth some \$800m (£493m) a year world-wide and growing fast. "This is a very important day for us," he said.

Mr Travers said the result validated the effectiveness of Cortecs' oral drug delivery system, which enables large molecules to be taken into the

stomach without being destroyed. The group is also using it to develop an insulin pill.

The brittle bone data, taken from 212 post-menopausal women, showed that patients taking Macritonin had dramatically lower levels of a chemical associated with bone breakdown in their urine compared to those on a dummy pill.

Crucially, the study also showed that Macritonin was as good as the current nasal spray. Cortecs' filing in Europe depends on it proving the drug is "equivalent" to existing treatments.

Analysts welcomed the data, but were concerned that a quarter of the patient sample were discarded due to "exceptional responses". Nomura analyst Nick Woolf said: "It's news that everyone wanted to hear. But things look tight. Cortecs need 30 patients per group to register for approval and they have 24. This is also just three months' data."

He added that the group would need a marketing partner to hit its share price target of 400p. Obvious candidates are Swiss drug giant Novartis, which makes nasal calcitonin, and French group RPR.

A spokesman for Novartis said: "Cortecs' study is obviously something we are aware of."

sport

Hingis saddled with a new test

Winning tennis titles and establishing records is child's play for Martina Hingis, the youngest-ever world No 1, who usually devotes much of her spare time to horse riding, rollerblading, swimming, fitness boxing and skiing. Nursing an injury is nobody's idea of fun, and inactivity has proved a major challenge.

The 16-year-old Swiss prodigy's boredom has been alleviated to a certain extent now that she is allowed back on a court after undergoing arthroscopic surgery to repair a torn ligament in her left knee. The damage was caused by a fall from a horse on 21 April.

So far, Hingis's practice sessions have amounted to little more than hitting balls fed to her by her mother, Melanie Molitor, who is also her coach. The gentle exercise is important, none the less, enabling Hingis, who has never been injured before, to stay in touch with the game.

According to her mother, the Australian Open champion will be able to engage in serious practice next Monday, leaving her with only a week to prepare for the next Grand Slam tournament, the French Open, which starts on 26 May. Wimbledon follows one month later.

The timescale of Hingis's rehabilitation is subject to the approval of Dr Christian Schenk, a specialist in sports injuries, whose clinic in Schruns, Austria, is a 45-minute drive from the player's home in Trubach, Switzerland. Hingis travels each day for three hours' treatment.

Although Hingis has a horse of her own, Montana, in Trubach, the one from which she took a tumble belongs to a friend. It was the first time Hingis had ridden the horse, and her concentration may have been impaired by tiredness after tennis practice in the afternoon following a long walk in the morning.

Her reaction was to pick

John Roberts talks to the youngest women's tennis No 1 in history about her recent injury and the possibility of playing doubles with her great namesake

herself up and smile, just as she did after falling off a horse named Magic Girl in Melbourne during the Australian Open in January. The difference this time was that Hingis was hurt.

Older tennis followers will recall Maureen Connolly, the brilliant American whose career was ended by a riding accident soon after her third Wimbledon success in 1954, aged 20. "Little Mo" received a severe leg injury when her horse, Colonel Merryboy—a gift from a group in her home city, San Diego, at-

'I will go horse riding again but I'm not as good as I thought. I have to be more careful'

ter her initial Wimbledon triumph in 1952—was struck by a truck.

"My right leg was slashed to the bone," Connolly recounted in her autobiography. "All the calf muscles were severed and the fibula broken. Eventually, I got on court again but I was aware that I could never play tournament tennis."

Hingis and her mother incline towards the philosophy of living for the moment, Melanie acknowledging that exposure to a range of sporting activities is fundamental to her daughter's happiness and success.

Martina subscribes to the view expressed by Tim Henman, Britain's No 1, whose participation in pursuits such as golf and football has been

called into question — "being careful is one thing, but you can't wrap yourself in cotton wool."

However, while Henman confines his sporting versatility to rounds of golf with fellow tennis pros and friends and keeping goal for the Lawn Tennis Association's football team, Hingis has taken her involvement a stage further by competing in a show jumping tournament.

The event was held in March in Roznov, her mother's birthplace in the Czech Republic, soon after Hingis had inspired Switzerland to a Fed Cup victory in Kosice, Slovakia, where she was born. Riding Sorrento, her other horse, Hingis finished fifth out of 15 on her debut. She would have been placed higher but for neglecting to jump one of the fences.

"I went the wrong way," Hingis said. "The horse didn't make a mistake. That was my mistake. I was just so nervous out there making my first show jumping tournament. The horse was perfect. I was very surprised about her, how she went through with me without any mistakes."

Overall, the experience was "fun". Whether it is likely to be repeated in view of last week's mishap remains to be seen. "I will go horseback riding again, but probably I'm not as good as I thought," she says. "I have to be more careful."

Sorrento's original name was Sylvia. Hingis decided to change it. "Sylvia's like a usual girl's name, not a horse's name, I think," she explains. "I was looking through the Yellow Pages and there was a restaurant, Sorrento. I also know the city, Sorrento, in Italy, and I just made it feminine, Sorrento."



Martina Hingis, indulging two of her great passions outside the world of tennis



Photographs: Reuters/Alisport

Double Martina on the rocks

The young Hingis was named Martina after Martina Navratilova. Recently, the great former champion suggested it might be appropriate for the pair to team up to play doubles at Wimbledon and the three other Grand Slam tournaments in Australia, France and the United States, writes John Roberts.

It was a tempting idea, notwithstanding that Navratilova, 40, is a year older than Hingis's mother, Navratilova is one little short of Billie Jean King's Wimbledon record of 20 (singles, doubles and mixed).

and last July Hingis became the youngest-ever All England Club champion (15 years and 282 days) after winning the doubles with Helena Sukova.

Hingis reluctantly declined. "Martina asked me last year at the US Open — not actually me, but through the agents — and I said it would be hard just to play the Grand Slams. I have to find some practice. You can't just play the big tournaments. You would get too nervous unless you started playing with that person a little bit more, even though she's a great player."

"It's such a thrill because it's her, you know. She was such a big hero for tennis, and she was a big idol and a big athlete, and she won Wimbledon so many times. It was a very hard decision for me, but I don't just want to play those four tournaments."

"All the press would be like, 'Oh, Martina/Martina, what really happened?' For me, it's like she's a different generation than I am. She's a player who was great, especially at Wimbledon. But it's gone, and something new has to come in."

Hingis's relations with Sukova have soured since their partnership was dissolved at the end of last year. Sukova had heard that Hingis was planning to cut down on doubles play to keep herself fresh for singles, besides which her mother and coach, Melanie Molitor, was not entirely convinced that Sukova still had the game and the stamina to complement her daughter's play.

Stand by for Hingis and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, a partnership formed in unusual circumstances. Hingis was on stage to open the envelope when Sanchez Vicario and Jana Novotna were declared WTA Tour Doubles Team of the Year for 1996 at last month's awards gala in Miami.

There was no sign of Novotna as Sanchez Vicario stepped up to receive the trophy. "I'm alone — not for the first time," the Spaniard said. "Why don't you play with me?" Hingis ventured. There was laughter at the time, but the suggestion was genuine.

"I want Arantxa to be my partner because I think she's the best doubles player in the world," Hingis says. "And she speaks German."



INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

LATEST RESULTS AND TOP 50 TEAMS

Top Fifty LEAGUE TABLE

CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 17 AUGUST - 4 MAY

POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	MR PETER FRANKENTAL	JOSE MARTI	975
2	MR PAUL MATTHEWS	THE DOORMATS	953
3	MR SIMON LIU	DEFENCE ROVERS	942
4	MR BEN KENDALL	TURKEY'S TRIGGERS	942
5	MR SEAN BROSNAN	OASIS	938
6	MR ASHLEY BRETTE	RELEGATION 12	937
7	MR BEN ANDREWS	BOOZERS BATTTLERS	933
8	MR KEITH HOBBS	ORGANIC MANURE FC	926
9	MR G. WHITE	WHITETIT	926
10	MR ADAM DEACON	ADAMS ACES	923
11	MR SCOTT MCINERNEY	-	922
12	MR PETER FRANKENTAL	SANDINO	922
13	MR RICK YAP	OUT OF MIND	922
14	MR WILLIAM BARR	KRUEGER FC	922
15	MR F. J. GREAVES	ANONYMOUS ROVERS	921
16	MR GARFIELD MACALEH	GARFIELD BOYS 2ND	920
17	MR SWANNY	DOGS BRICK	919
18	MR S. J. GODWIN	NOBWOOD	919
19	MR KARUN DHIR	THE RAIL MADRAS	916
20	MR LAM GROUT	SILK CITY	915
21	MR PETER FRANKENTAL	ARLENSU	915
22	MR ANDREW BOLTON	ANDREWS B TEAM	915
23	MR O. R. MILLS	THE MUSHROOM LAYERS	915
24	MR ALEXANDRA PEAST	THE ZOROSTRIAN ZENITH ZYRUE	912
25	MR TERRY JONES	ANDROGEN LTD	911
26	MR O. J. JOHNSON	THE AWAY WINNERS	911
27	MR ADAM HOGG	BLAGGY HOGG	909
28	MR J. MCCROSSIN	WASH TOW ARMY	909
29	MR JOHN COX	SOUTHERN RC	908
30	MR L. KETTMEWELL	-	908
31	MR MARK HAYDEN	TROWBROGIE WANDERERS	908
32	MR TONY AKINDALE	OLLIE VILLA	907
33	MR MARTIN GASTON	WOTAGAS	907
34	MR TERENCE FLEMLEY	THIS TIME	907
35	MR ANDY LANE	IF ANYONE CAN TOUCAN	907
36	MR STEVE BAZZINO	BAZZO'S DEFENCE	904
37	MR JOHN WANING	4000 HOLES	904
38	MR GRAEME STUBBS	THE STUBBS	904
39	MR DAVID MAHER	THE ELITE OF THE ELITE	903
40	MR GERMAN	ATHLETICO ASETICO I	902
41	MR MARK MIDDLETON	SUN & THE GO GO DANCING MUPPETS	902
42	MR K. B. MALCOLM	INTER MALCOLM	902
43	MR GARETH HARDY	YOUNG BOYS BARNESLEY	902
44	MR PAUL BROWN	ASHTON MOON PIG	902
45	MR S. J. PERRY	THE GREAT ESCAPERS	901
46	MR S. DRAPER	PLATE C	900
47	MR PETER SHERLOCK	LINCOLN ST. GILES	899
48	MR BILL COOPER	YEP HOP 2000	899
49	MR ROBERT PRINGLE	DEEPDALE VILLA 7	898
50	MR ANDY HOWARTH	T.D.C.	898
51	MR BARRY MORGAN	BAZZO'S BOYS	898
52	MR PAUL HARRIS	CELI CITY	898
53	MR NEIL ENTHWISTLE	JERRY BANK ATHLETIC	898

THE INDEPENDENT

Today we publish the latest results from The Independent Fantasy Football game, supported by Philips Energy Saver Lightbulbs.

The final team market and scores table is published below. The week 39 (Wk39) column lists all points scored in the final week of the Premiership season (Monday 5 May - Sunday 11 May). Column A lists all points scored before the transfer period, column B lists all points scored after the transfer period. The Overall column (Ov) lists the total amount of points

scored in all matches played from Saturday 17 August - Sunday 11 May.

Also published today is the top 50 league table. It lists the overall top scoring Independent Fantasy Football managers and their teams for matches played between

SCORING SYSTEM

4 points for a goal ■ 4 points for a goalkeeper/defender clean sheet ■ 3 points for a successful assist ■ 1 point when a player is selected and plays ■ 1 point for a winning goal ■ 3 points for a manager win, 1 point for a draw ■ Lose 1 point for a yellow card ■ Lose 3 points for a red card

TEAM MARKET AND SCORES

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 17 AUGUST - 11 MAY; WEEK 39 SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 5 MAY - 11 MAY

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	W39	P	A	Ov	VALUE	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	W39	P	A	Ov	VALUE
300	GOALKEEPERS							400	DEFENDERS						
301	Seaman	ARS	1	5	28	34	4.0	401	Dixon	LIV	2	2	3	7	3.0
302	Roche	AV	1	5	23	28	4.0	402	Wintburn	ARS	1	6	34	40	4.0
303	Flowers	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	403	Boyd	ARS	1	12	25	37	2.2
304	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	404	Adams	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
305	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	405	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
306	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	406	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
307	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	407	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
308	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	408	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
309	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	409	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
310	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	410	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
311	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	411	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
312	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	412	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
313	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	413	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
314	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	414	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
315	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	415	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
316	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	416	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
317	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	417	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
318	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	418	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
319	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	419	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
320	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	420	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
321	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	421	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
322	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	422	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
323	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	423	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
324	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	424	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
325	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	425	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
326	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	426	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
327	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	427	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
328	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	428	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
329	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	429	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
330	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	430	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
331	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	431	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
332	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	432	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
333	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	433	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
334	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	434	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
335	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	435	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
336	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	436	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
337	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	437	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
338	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	438	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
339	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	439	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
340	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	440	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
341	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	441	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
342	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	442	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
343	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	443	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
344	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	444	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
345	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	445	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
346	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	446	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
347	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	447	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
348	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	448	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
349	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	449	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.6
350	Hendrick	SLA	6	6	19	25	3.0	450	Wintburn	ARS	1	15	31	46	1.

Verse perfect in Oaks rehearsal Dip can start a plunge

Racing

GREG WOOD
reports from York

It was an afternoon for connoisseurs of the unusual on the Knavesmire yesterday, and not simply because Reams Of Verse for next month's Oaks after her crushing success, Ladbrokes quoted 7-4, and laid it for the remainder of the day.

To the average backer with a spare £10 note, this might not seem significant, but in terms of the percentages which underpin the odds, it is little different from offering 8-1 when every other one is 5-1. Ladbrokes took the best part of £100,000 before closing the price to 5-4, and in the rush to get on, few punters stopped to ask themselves why a firm which has spent decades accumulating should suddenly seem so keen to give it away.

In fact, there are at least two reasons why Henry Cecil's filly,

on the bridge, but it is still worth noting that while their main competitors offered no better than even odds, Reams Of Verse for next month's Oaks after her crushing success, Ladbrokes quoted 7-4, and laid it for the remainder of the day.

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In fact, there are at least two reasons why Henry Cecil's filly,

his sixth winner of the Musidora in 11 years, might fail to reproduce yesterday's awesome form at Epsom on June. Pedigree experts are suspicious of her sire, the miler Nureyev, and question whether she will stay the extra two furlongs of the

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Benny The Dip (York 3.10)
NB: Prince Bahar (York 3.40)

Classic, while those with an eye for conformation point out that Reams Of Verse is heavy about the shoulders, and might not enjoy the ups and downs in Surrey, particularly on firm ground.

Cecil, of course, will have none of it. "On pedigree she's not certain to get a mile and a

half," the trainer said, "but she's very relaxed and there's every chance she will. She was coughing before the Guineas [in which she was sixth to her stablemate Sleepytime], and that run has really brought her on."

Kieren Fallon, Cecil's stable jockey, was on the winner in the Newmarket Classic, but there is no doubt which saddle he will occupy on Oaks day. "I gave her a blow-out up Warren Hill yesterday," Fallon said, "and it was the most excited I've been all year. It was a fantastic feeling, even more exciting than winning the Guineas. She settles so well and she's really well-balanced, and I can't see why she shouldn't be an Oaks winner."

The Musidora was, in theory, the only Classic trial on card, but there was also talk of Epsom after the handicap won

easily by The Fly. Barry Hills' colt is still among the Derby entries, and though he was not even at the head of the weights yesterday, his trainer is tempted to let him take his chance.

Michael Hills, The Fly's jockey, was riding his 1,000th winner in Britain, but there was less to celebrate in another corner of the weighing room. Royston French, one of the best apprentices, was left to ponder on a four-day ban for his ride on Zaraska in the opener, which the stewards considered to be an example of "schooling in public". Luca Cumani, Zaraska's trainer, also took the blame, and was fined £700. Zaraska, though, will be pleased with the outcome. He too will have an unexpected holiday - the stewards banned him from racing for 30 days.

RICHARD EDMONDSON

Such is Entrepreneur's hold on the Derby market that the only threat to Michael Stoute's colt at Epsom seems to be the possibility of IBM's technicians developing legs for Deep Blue.

The Predominate Stakes at Goodwood next week has become a hollow trial and it's a challenge to emerge to the 2,000 Guineas winner it will have to come today on the Knavesmire.

The Dante Stakes at least offers succour for those who look for winners not in the form book but in historical times. Last year Glory Of Dancer and Dushyant, who were first and second went on to be fourth and second respectively at Epsom. In addition, Shaabani, Reference Point and Shabranah have all gone on from the Dante to win the Blue Riband in recent times.

It was not easy to find a beast that might follow in their hoof-prints yesterday, as the disclaimers whistled around. Usually, the winner of a Racing Post Trophy selected for winter toping in Dubai would be a strong fancy, but it transpires that Medaelyne returned from Doncaster as if a crowbar had been taken to his leg. "The trip will suit him, as will the ground, and he's been working nicely," Simon Crisford, the Godolphin racing manager, said. "But he missed a lot of time after the Racing Post Trophy with a chip in his knee. We've been behind schedule since and so he's bound to improve for the run."

Yorkshire will be a popular coincidence choice, but then Surrey Dancer did not win the Derby. "He'll improve fitness and experience-wise because he's not had a trouble-free preparation," his jockey, Rich-

ard Quinn, said. "This is the closest we've got him to fitness."

Maktoum Al Maktoum has two entries but not double the chance, according to his racing manager. "Musadil is very promising, but he's out of a fast mare and it's a question of whether he'll get the trip," Joe Mercer said. "Benny The Dip is the one we've got to beat because he's beaten Desert Story twice."

Benny too has had problems. "After Sandown he had a cough and some mucus, so it hasn't been plain sailing," John Gosden, his trainer, said. "But he's back working nicely now."

BENNY THE DIP (nap 3.10) looked as if he had emerged from liberation but turned in a persuasive performance at Epsom, where he blew longer than the little piggies' houses. Speculation in the markets suggests he is now back close to his best.

YORK

2.05 Charlotte Corday (nb)
2.35 Bishop Court
3.10 Musadil

3.40 WINTER ROMANCE (nap)
4.10 Bodyguard
4.40 Midyan Blue

GOING: Good.
STALLS: 40-45, 46-47, 48-49, 50-51, 52-53, 54-55, 56-57, 58-59, 60-61, 62-63, 64-65, 66-67, 68-69, 70-71, 72-73, 74-75, 76-77, 78-79, 80-81, 82-83, 84-85, 86-87, 88-89, 90-91, 92-93, 94-95, 96-97, 98-99, 100-101, 102-103, 104-105, 106-107, 108-109, 110-111, 112-113, 114-115, 116-117, 118-119, 120-121, 122-123, 124-125, 126-127, 128-129, 130-131, 132-133, 134-135, 136-137, 138-139, 140-141, 142-143, 144-145, 146-147, 148-149, 150-151, 152-153, 154-155, 156-157, 158-159, 160-161, 162-163, 164-165, 166-167, 168-169, 170-171, 172-173, 174-175, 176-177, 178-179, 180-181, 182-183, 184-185, 186-187, 188-189, 190-191, 192-193, 194-195, 196-197, 198-199, 200-201, 202-203, 204-205, 206-207, 208-209, 210-211, 212-213, 214-215, 216-217, 218-219, 220-221, 222-223, 224-225, 226-227, 228-229, 230-231, 232-233, 234-235, 236-237, 238-239, 240-241, 242-243, 244-245, 246-247, 248-249, 250-251, 252-253, 254-255, 256-257, 258-259, 260-261, 262-263, 264-265, 266-267, 268-269, 270-271, 272-273, 274-275, 276-277, 278-279, 280-281, 282-283, 284-285, 286-287, 288-289, 290-291, 292-293, 294-295, 296-297, 298-299, 300-301, 302-303, 304-305, 306-307, 308-309, 310-311, 312-313, 314-315, 316-317, 318-319, 320-321, 322-323, 324-325, 326-327, 328-329, 330-331, 332-333, 334-335, 336-337, 338-339, 340-341, 342-343, 344-345, 346-347, 348-349, 350-351, 352-353, 354-355, 356-357, 358-359, 360-361, 362-363, 364-365, 366-367, 368-369, 370-371, 372-373, 374-375, 376-377, 378-379, 380-381, 382-383, 384-385, 386-387, 388-389, 390-391, 392-393, 394-395, 396-397, 398-399, 400-401, 402-403, 404-405, 406-407, 408-409, 410-411, 412-413, 414-415, 416-417, 418-419, 420-421, 422-423, 424-425, 426-427, 428-429, 430-431, 432-433, 434-435, 436-437, 438-439, 440-441, 442-443, 444-445, 446-447, 448-449, 450-451, 452-453, 454-455, 456-457, 458-459, 460-461, 462-463, 464-465, 466-467, 468-469, 470-471, 472-473, 474-475, 476-477, 478-479, 480-481, 482-483, 484-485, 486-487, 488-489, 490-491, 492-493, 494-495, 496-497, 498-499, 500-501, 502-503, 504-505, 506-507, 508-509, 510-511, 512-513, 514-515, 516-517, 518-519, 520-521, 522-523, 524-525, 526-527, 528-529, 530-531, 532-533, 534-535, 536-537, 538-539, 540-541, 542-543, 544-545, 546-547, 548-549, 550-551, 552-553, 554-555, 556-557, 558-559, 560-561, 562-563, 564-565, 566-567, 568-569, 570-571, 572-573, 574-575, 576-577, 578-579, 580-581, 582-583, 584-585, 586-587, 588-589, 590-591, 592-593, 594-595, 596-597, 598-599, 600-601, 602-603, 604-605, 606-607, 608-609, 610-611, 612-613, 614-615, 616-617, 618-619, 620-621, 622-623, 624-625, 626-627, 628-629, 630-631, 632-633, 634-635, 636-637, 638-639, 640-641, 642-643, 644-645, 646-647, 648-649, 650-651, 652-653, 654-655, 656-657, 658-659, 660-661, 662-663, 664-665, 666-667, 668-669, 670-671, 672-673, 674-675, 676-677, 678-679, 680-681, 682-683, 684-685, 686-687, 688-689, 690-691, 692-693, 694-695, 696-697, 698-699, 700-701, 702-703, 704-705, 706-707, 708-709, 710-711, 712-713, 714-715, 716-717, 718-719, 720-721, 722-723, 724-725, 726-727, 728-729, 730-731, 732-733, 734-735, 736-737, 738-739, 740-741, 742-743, 744-745, 746-747, 748-749, 750-751, 752-753, 754-755, 756-757, 758-759, 760-761, 762-763, 764-765, 766-767, 768-769, 770-771, 772-773, 774-775, 776-777, 778-779, 780-781, 782-783, 784-785, 786-787, 788-789, 790-791, 792-793, 794-795, 796-797, 798-799, 800-801, 802-803, 804-805, 806-807, 808-809, 810-811, 812-813, 814-815, 816-817, 818-819, 820-821, 822-823, 824-825, 826-827, 828-829, 830-831, 832-833, 834-835, 836-837, 838-839, 840-841, 842-843, 844-845, 846-847, 848-849, 850-851, 852-853, 854-855, 856-857, 858-859, 860-861, 862-863, 864-865, 866-867, 868-869, 870-871, 872-873, 874-875, 876-877, 878-879, 880-881, 882-883, 884-885, 886-887, 888-889, 890-891, 892-893, 894-895, 896-897, 898-899, 900-901, 902-903, 904-905, 906-907, 908-909, 910-911, 912-913, 914-915, 916-917, 918-919, 920-921, 922-923, 924-925, 926-927, 928-929, 930-931, 932-933, 934-935, 936-937, 938-939, 940-941, 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2044-2045, 2046

sport

Heartened by the joy of Juninho



Ken Jones is not the only observer to be impressed by Middlesbrough's diminutive, tireless midfielder magician

It is safe to assume that a gathering of League managers and coaches in Essex this week will not pass without enthusiastic references to Juninho cropping up in conversation. More than electrifying technique puts the little Brazilian ahead of all but a handful of players in the Premier League; also there is the commitment — "his courage to play and the courage to want the ball all the time" is how the Manchester United manager, Alex Ferguson, put it last week to Hugh McLivannan of the *Sunday Times* — that speaks of a model professional.

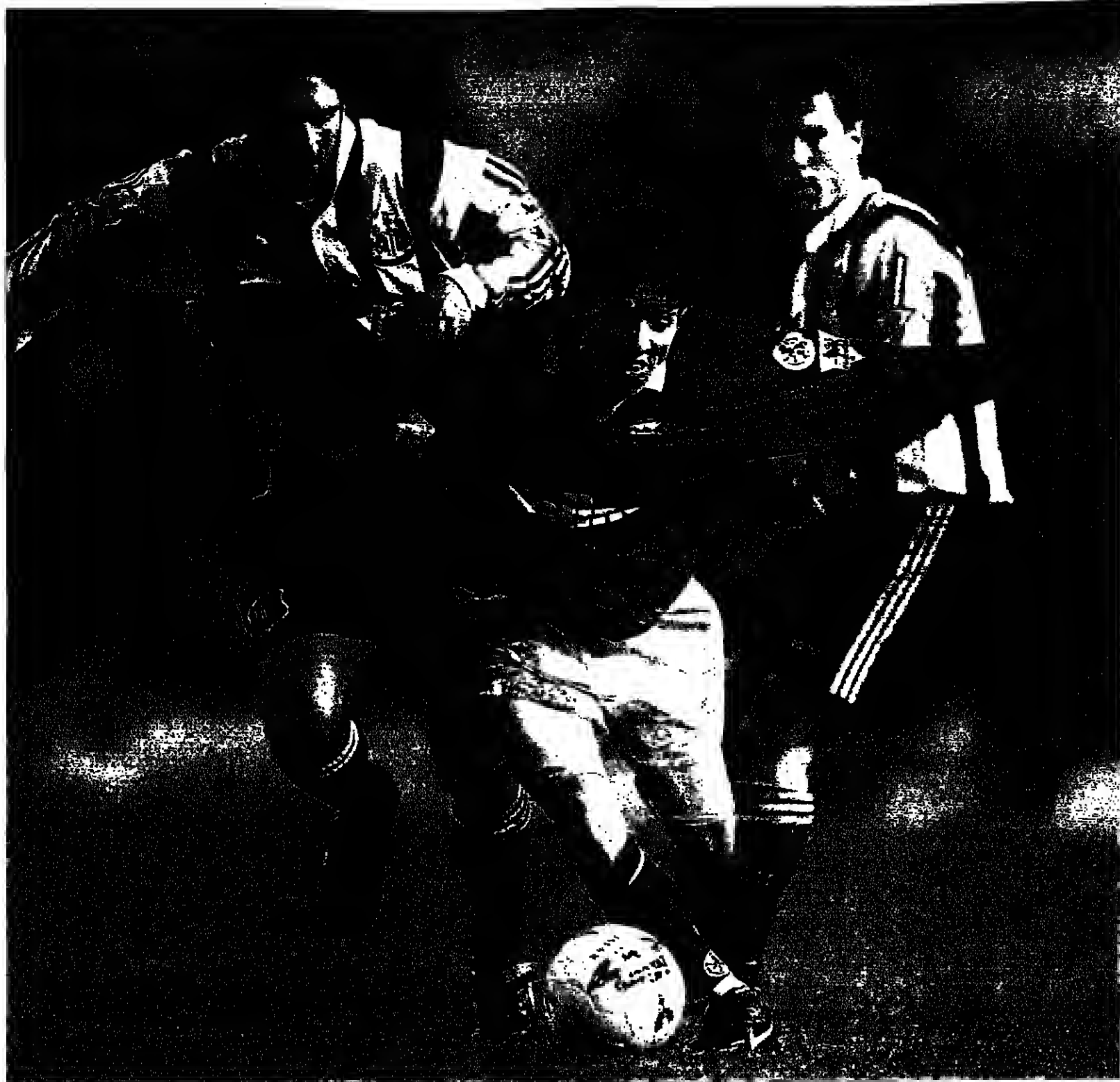
As Middlesbrough's relegation makes it unlikely that Juninho will remain with them after the FA Cup final against Chelsea on Saturday there is bound to be speculation that he will be seen in Manchester United's colours next season. Ferguson expressed his admiration for Juninho publicly following the 3-3 draw Middlesbrough gained last week at Old Trafford, a match I watched on television in the company of the former Chelsea and Manchester United manager, Dave Sexton, who is now employed as a member of England's coaching and scouting staff. The constraints imposed on Sexton by a serious heart operation from which he is making a rapid recovery could not prevent the excitement he felt whenever Juninho got on the ball.

It is not only true aficionados who drool over the Brazilian. "Juninho is a brilliant footballer," Sexton said, "but unlike many of his type it isn't necessary to allow for shortcomings. Just a little guy, frail by comparison with most of today's players, but brave and resilient and with such energy."

A little guy, frail by comparison with most of today's players, but brave and resilient and with such energy

Unaware of the little man's rapid development, he asked Brazil's coach, Mario Zagallo, if it was now the policy to select schoolboys. The game over, Dunga knelt at Juninho's feet. Seeing Juninho run out to play for Brazil against Sweden at Villa Park two years ago, Dunga's first impression was understandable. You had to wonder whether he had got on the wrong bus. Was he really the mascot? Then the marvellous sleight of foot, his decisive running with the ball and imaginative passing.

Since the turn of the year Juninho has been outstanding and in the context of Middlesbrough's struggles, ahead, I think, of Zola who beat him to



Little big man: Juninho (centre) has the heart and the temperament to cope with English football

Photograph: Mark Thompson/Allsport

Footballer of the Year. That view is endorsed by Ferguson, who says: "Against us he's been superb, the best player I've seen in the Premier this season." Comparisons are blurred by differences in deployment but when assessing the Wembley potential of both players for our sister paper last week, the Football Association's technical director, Howard Wilkinson, emphasised the extent of Juninho's involvement. In one of the matches Wilkinson watched Juninho participated once a minute. "On nine out of 10 occasions what he did with the ball had a positive outcome," he said. Character, courage and similar goodies are shorthand for relentless aggressiveness, for being the tough competitor Juninho unquestionably is.

It was this, as much as gifts from the womb that impressed Tele Santana while he was the coach at São Paulo, after his close rivals, Portuguese, dumped Juninho from their coaching scheme on the grounds that he was too small for the professional game. The coach elect of Palmeiras, if diabetes does not force his retirement, Santana would probably have led Brazil to victory in the 1982 World Cup finals but for the loss of a gifted centre-forward, Reinaldo. He said: "It does not surprise me that Juninho has made a big success in English football, because he has a big heart and an excellent temperament. I can't imagine that there is a player in the world who can intimidate him. And he was al-

ways a joy to work with, a really nice boy who never gave us any trouble." It is not difficult to come up with glowing tributes, the consoling arms that Leeds players draped around Juninho's shoulder after his unflinching effort against them last Monday that tempted too much on his own today but there is no denying that his attitude is an object lesson to most of the players in England. The back-pass rule has been good for the game but it has made it more difficult for

midfield players to get into positions where they can be given the ball. It isn't a problem for Juninho and I think his shape — long legs, short body — is a big advantage because he always looks well balanced. Through friendship with a Birmingham-based Italian who represents Juninho in this country (Juninho is of Italian stock), Sexton has twice visited the Brazilian's temporary home near Middlesbrough. "I think that having his parents over here has been a big help because they are obviously a close-knit family," he said. "The father is a real football man and he went on about the *abelhinhas* (wall pass-ers) Pele and Coutinho would put together in one move when they were playing for Santos. I enjoyed their company and

Juninho sets such a good example on and off the field that it will be a big loss to English football if he goes away." Concerned about his place in the national team (Brazil recently trounced Mexico 4-0 without him) Juninho has invited Pele and his boyhood idol, Zico, to the Cup final in the hope that they will carry back a favourable impression. He takes nothing for granted. "Brazil can again call on many great players," he told Sexton. "It is my ambition to play in the World Cup but nothing is for certain." It suggests that Saturday will see Juninho in Middlesbrough's colours for the last time and that only Manchester United have the clout to keep him in English football.

McGhee feels the play-off pressure

Mark McGhee is in no doubt of the magnitude of the test facing Wolverhampton if they are to overturn a 3-1 deficit when they meet Crystal Palace in the second leg of the First Division play-off at Molineux tonight.

"We will have to produce our best performance of the season to go through," was the Scot's blunt assessment yesterday. Two goals by Dougie Freedman in the closing minutes of the first meeting at Selhurst Park on Saturday has left Wolves with a formidable task.

Yet McGhee, like his mentor Alex Ferguson, is an adept manipulator of the psychological aspects of the game and the manager will need to employ those skills fully if Wolves are to progress to Wembley, and a meeting with either Ipswich or Sheffield United. McGhee said: "The team I am able to select at the moment will have to do more than play well. They are going to have to give something extra to win this football match by two clear goals. We are really asking for what amounts to the performance of the season. If we only play well then Palace will be good enough to match us."

There is going to have to be that extra ingredient produced if we are to make it but I don't think that's impossible to achieve. Steve Froggatt, Don Goodman and Mark Venus, all absent at Selhurst Park through injury, will undergo fitness tests today. In the other play-off match, George Burley may gamble on the precocious talents of Keiran Dyer at Portman Road. With Paul Mason, Ipswich's leading scorer, suffering a hamstring strain, Burley gave the England Under-19 international his first start of the season in Saturday's first-leg draw at Bramall Lane.

Now Mason is fit, but the Ipswich manager is reluctant to say whether the 18-year-old will make way. "It's a nice problem to have," said Burley, who is considering using Steve Sedgley as one of three central defenders rather than in his usual midfield role. "Keiran was outstanding and has every chance of being involved again."

In the Second Division play-offs, Brentford defend a 2-1 first leg lead against Bristol City at Griffin Park. Crewe also lead 2-1 from the first leg, but they face a difficult return against Luton at Kenilworth Road.

Hopes of an all-Wales Third Division play-off were dented by Cardiff's 1-0 first leg home defeat by Northampton, although Swansea could still reach Wembley. They face Chester at the Vetch Field following a goalless draw at the Deva Stadium.

Bates keeps faith with 'unlucky' Vialli

GLENN MOORE

It seemed the final indignity when Gianluca Vialli was substituted early in the first half of Chelsea's last Premiership match of the season at Everton on Sunday. Vialli was made the fall guy for the dismissal of Frode Grodas, and few Chelsea fans expect him to stay at the club beyond Saturday's FA Cup final against Middlesbrough at Wembley.

However, Ken Bates, the

Chelsea chairman, who was the first to commiserate with Vialli on Sunday, said yesterday that he expected Vialli to remain at the club.

"He was changed very early and came out of the dressing-room first on Sunday," Bates said. "I was there, I gave him a big hug and said to him: 'You're not having any luck at the moment you're even being substituted for a goalkeeper.'"

Vialli is expected to be a substitute on Saturday and Bates added: "It is a measure of the

strength of our squad that he's on the bench. But I wouldn't anticipate him not to be here next season. He likes London, he's very happy to be driven around by chauffeur, to sneak the odd dog when he thinks no one's looking, it's his kind of town."

"I wouldn't expect him to be happy about not being in the first team, I would not expect that of any player whether he was 17 or 37. I expect a certain amount of loyalty in that situation, but also dissatisfaction otherwise it would mean the

player had given up striving. He has two years to go on his contract and his future is down to the manager. All team selection and purchases are down to the manager."

Vialli joined Chelsea on a free transfer from Juventus who he captained to success in the European Cup final last May. The shaven-headed figure was an immediate hit with the supporters but his relationship with Gullit, a one-time friend in Italy, appears to have deteriorated. The incident at Goodison

Park on Sunday follows an equally humiliating occasion at Fratton Park in the FA Cup sixth round when he was ready to come on as substitute only to be sent back to the bench when a defender was injured and a different player brought on.

Yet both his and Gullit's reaction in the wake of the semi-final win over Wimbledon suggested that the rift was nothing like as serious as media speculation had indicated. Vialli, despite his lack of matches, finished the season as Chelsea's top

League goalscorer and could yet play a part both in the FA Cup final and, given his dedication to personal fitness, next season. Bates added: "It is now a squad game we have often had three or four supposedly recognised first-team players not playing."

Were Vialli to leave, Chelsea, despite paying him wages reputedly approaching £1m per year, could still be in profit as they signed him for nothing and will be entitled to a fee. They would prefer, though, to keep him at the club.



Vialli: Fans' favourite

Trophy hunt begins for Barcelona

Bobby Robson is facing an important few weeks, starting tonight, when Barcelona meet the holders, Paris St-Germain, in the European Cup-Winners' Cup final in Rotterdam.

The former England manager said: "We could end up winning a treble of Spanish league, Spanish Cup and the European Cup-Winners' Cup, but at the same time we could end up winning nothing."

Robson conceded that his side were favourites to win the Cup-Winners' Cup for an unprecedented fourth time, but said: "Paris St-Germain have not played for 11 days, while we had a very bruising match with Real Madrid on Saturday."

"That game really took a lot out of my players and I think it could have given a big advantage to the French team who are very well rested."

He said the bomb scare which delayed Barcelona's flight to Rotterdam for four hours on Monday had not unduly disturbed his squad. "They have all got over that and are just looking forward to the match."

Barcelona (probables): Vitor Baia; Sergio, Bruno, Alcaraz, Ferrer, Guaita, Luis Enrique, De La Peña, Sanchez, Figo, Ronaldo. Paris St-Germain (probables): Larni; Forner, N'Gony, Le Guen, Algerio, Leroy, Guast, Guerin, Leonardo, Rai, Lolo.

League praises play-offs for growing attendances

The Football League was yesterday celebrating the attendance explosion that has attracted four and a half million new fans to the game over the last decade.

Since the advent of the play-offs and the improvement in stadium facilities following the dark days of Haysell and Hillsborough, officials at Lytham insist the oldest league competition in the

world has gone from strength to strength despite the Premier League breakaway five seasons ago. The figures back this up with attendances climbing steadily in the 10 seasons since the play-off system was introduced.

In the 1985-86 season, the old First, Second and Third Divisions attracted 7,450,723 spectators. This year the final total is 11,986,723 a figure that does

not include play-off games but which represents a 60.3 percent increase in just 11 seasons.

It makes the Football League the best supported competition, in any sport, in Britain and their spokesman, Chris Hull, said: "We believe the play-offs have been the key to the growth because they have opened up opportunities for more clubs, while there has been a real improvement in the way clubs have started marketing themselves."

"It's also fair to say that in Britain we now have the finest group of stadia in the world. That has helped make the game more attractive to family groups and women and children."

Average attendances in the First Division have jumped 52.2

percent since 1985-86 to 12,327, with the Second Division increasing 33.6 percent to 6,037 and a 31.3 percent improvement taking place in the Third Division to 3,351.

Authorities in Romania have detained 59 fans and fined 1,000 others since supporters set fire to a stand in a Bucharest stadium before a derby match last weekend.

A spokesman for the police said yesterday that an inquiry was continuing into the actions of the 59 fans held in Bucharest jails since last Saturday's match in which Steaua Bucharest beat arch rivals Dinamo. The others, charged with minor public order offences, were fined the equivalent of £2 to £11 in a

country where average monthly wages stand at about £50. More than 700 seats were destroyed and police herded some 2,000 supporters out of the stadium into parking lots to identify troublemakers. There were no injuries and the match was delayed only briefly.

Police said Dinamo Bucharest supporters had brought incendiary devices made of soft drink cans filled with varnish into Steaua's ground. Devices were concealed in drums to dupe the thousands of police drafted in, in anticipation of trouble.

Steaua, traditionally representing the military, and Dinamo, associated with the police, have a long history of bitter rivalry.

Del Piero 'for sale'

Alessandro Del Piero and Christian Vieri, bright young things of the richly talented Juventus, are up for sale — but the price is equally stellar.

Umberto Agnelli, the Turin club's owner, said both players may be transferred at the end of the season if the right offers from Spanish and English clubs are forthcoming.

"I wish both Del Piero and Vieri can stay with Juve next season... however, if bids between 30bn to 30bn lire (£11.25m to £16.8m) have been actually made for the two players, it's right for the club to take them in due consideration," Agnelli said yesterday.

Atletico Madrid reportedly offered 30bn lire for Vieri, a 23-

year-old striker who has become a regular with the Italian national team.

Del Piero, at 22 one of the most brilliant Italian players of his generation, is being sought by Newcastle. Reports put the bid for Del Piero by the Premier League club, who are to play Juventus in August in a game to mark the Serie A club's centenary, at 36bn lire.

Juventus are still competing for a third European Champions' Cup, against Borussia Dortmund in Munich on 28 May, and the Serie A title. Last year they sold the strikers Gianluca Vialli to Chelsea and Fabrizio Ravanelli to Middlesbrough after winning both competitions.

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Billington achieves his dream and joins the elite

Equestrianism
GENEVIEVE MURPHY

Geoff Billington achieved a long-standing goal last week when he moved up to eighth place on the World Jumping Rankings. He joins his Olympic team-mates, John (third), Michael Whitaker (sixth) and Nick Skelton (10th), among the top 10 in the world.

All four riders will be competing in the Royal Windsor Horse Show, which begins its five-day run this morning and

for the first time, is the venue for the British Nations Cup on Sunday. They will be jumping for prizes worth more than £150,000, which include a Land Rover Discovery to be awarded to the leading rider of the show.

Billington, Michael Whitaker, Skelton and Robert Smith have been chosen as the British quartet which will compete against teams from Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands. The German visitors include Carsten-Otto Nagel, who won the Grand Prix at Olympia last year.

Smith is still understandably devastated by the loss of his wonderful young stallion, Big Time, who died last month after an attack of colic. He was by far the best show jumper that Smith has ever ridden.

The 18-year-old Senator Tees Hanauer, winner of the 1996 World Cup qualifier at Olympia, is now likely to be Smith's mount for both Friday evening's Grand Prix and Sunday's Samsung Nations Cup. Smith will probably ride Orthos, owned jointly by Ronnie Masarella and Don Beard, in to-

morrow's Hildon International Team Trial.

This is the first in the new series of four team trials, from which the top three on overall points will automatically be selected for the British squad which contests the European Show Jumping Championships at Mannheim in Germany in August.

Billington expects to ride Solitaire, whom he bought 18 months ago in Denmark, in the trial. He will also be partnering his Olympic partner, Virtual Village II's Otto, and the promis-

ing eight-year-old Niko, who finished second, behind John Whitaker on Noble, in the Young Horse Championship at Minton last weekend.

Skelton's mounts will include Virtual Village Zalta, now fully recovered from the attack of colic which prevented him from competing in the Volvo World Cup final earlier this month. Skelton also rides Showtime and the stallion Tinka's Boy, who jumped a clear round in the Nations Cup last weekend in La Baule where he was sixth in the Grand Prix.

TODAY'S NUMBER

494

The number of points scored by Gloucester's Paul Mapletoft this season, making him the highest scorer in English first-class rugby union this season. Newbury's Nick Greelan was just behind with 473 points, with Richmond's Simon Mastin third highest with 441.

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Hingis horsing around
Women's world No 1 tennis player
talks to John Roberts, page 22

sport

Joy of Juninho
Ken Jones applauds Boro's
brilliant Brazilian, page 24

Best comes off worst to player power at Quins



Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWITT
AND DAVID LLEWELLYN

Hawke's Bay, standard bearers of English rugby's traditional Christian values for more decades than anyone cares to remember, last night dragged the game towards a bleak new era of football-style job insecurity by sacking their director of rugby and former England coach, Dick Best.

Although senior Quins executives denied the charge yesterday, their decision to sever links was largely justified upon them after a virulent outbreak of player discontent left Best without a dressing room to manage. A number of leading players, including Will Carling, the former England captain, complained to management that the coach had tried too hard to live up to his nickname of "Sulphuric". Indeed, one said last night: "It's

our awards dinner this evening and now that the news has been confirmed, we have something extra to celebrate." Many, however, will consider the action of the Quins board to have been far more poisonous than anything Best inflicted on his squad through his abrasive approach to man management. Best's crime appears to have been his insistence on compulsory daytime training - development viewed with some horror by those players

with lucrative jobs in the City. A club statement read: "Best's position has been terminated as a result of differences over playing policies." However, one senior management source was nearer the mark when he said: "On the one hand you have an abuse of power by Dick and on the other a case of player power. The reasons for his departure fall somewhere between the two."

Best, who will maintain a slender link with the club he loves by taking on a role as "consultant on playing matters", refused to shed further light on the matter last night. "The terms of my stepping aside involve me not commenting on the decision," he said, mindful of the lucrative pay-off to cover the remainder of his 10-year rolling contract - thought to have been the most secure deal ever negotiated by a coach in any code of football when it was finalised last year.

He follows John Hall, the director of rugby at Bath, and Mark Ring, who held a similar position at West Hartlepool, on professional rugby's newly formed scrapheap, but he is unlikely to remain there for very long. Despite a life-long commitment to the swanky Londoners - he joined as a player in 1973, captained them to a John Player Cup semi-final 11 years later and then coached them to Pilkington Cup glory in 1988 - he will have little hesitation in accepting one of the highly paid

posts that are certain to be offered over the next few weeks. Andy Keast, the assistant coach to Best and a member of the Lions backroom staff in South Africa this summer, is still in place at The Stoop. His long-term future is yet to be determined but if the suggestion proves correct that Ziffen Brooke, the No 8 now nearing the end of an illustrious All Black career, is about to take over, he may not consider it worth his while staying on.

Henman makes tentative return

Tennis
DERRICK WHYTE
reports from Rome

Although he did not suffer the same fate as Pete Sampras and Michael Chang, who were both knocked out in the first round of the Italian Open, Tim Henman did not have the easiest of days here yesterday.

The British No 1, playing in his first match since having an elbow operation in March and his first on a slow clay court since the French Open nearly a year ago, beat Roberto Carretero 4-6, 7-5, 2-0, the Spaniard having to retire with a thigh muscle injury.

Henman, however, had to save three match points at 4-5 down in the second set and was generally made to struggle by Carretero, a clay-court specialist who is ranked 334th in the world and has won only two matches all season.

Carretero drew first blood when he broke Henman's serve in the seventh game of the opening set. However, almost all the excitement came in the second set, in which Henman, struggling to find his best form, lost his service in the first game, broke back in the second but then 2-4 down. Carretero still led 5-3 and, after Henman had held his serve for 4-5, the Spaniard served for the match.

It proved a remarkable game. Henman was match point down three times before he finally won the game. That was the beginning of the end for Carretero as Henman won the set 7-5.

Henman went on to win the first two games of the third set before Carretero retired, complaining of a thigh muscle injury.

Earlier in the match he had complained of ankle trouble.

Henman, who will now meet one of two Italian qualifiers, Davide Scola or Daniele Musa, in the second round, dropped from 16 to 18 in the world rankings this week and defeat yesterday would have been a setback with the French Open less than two weeks away.

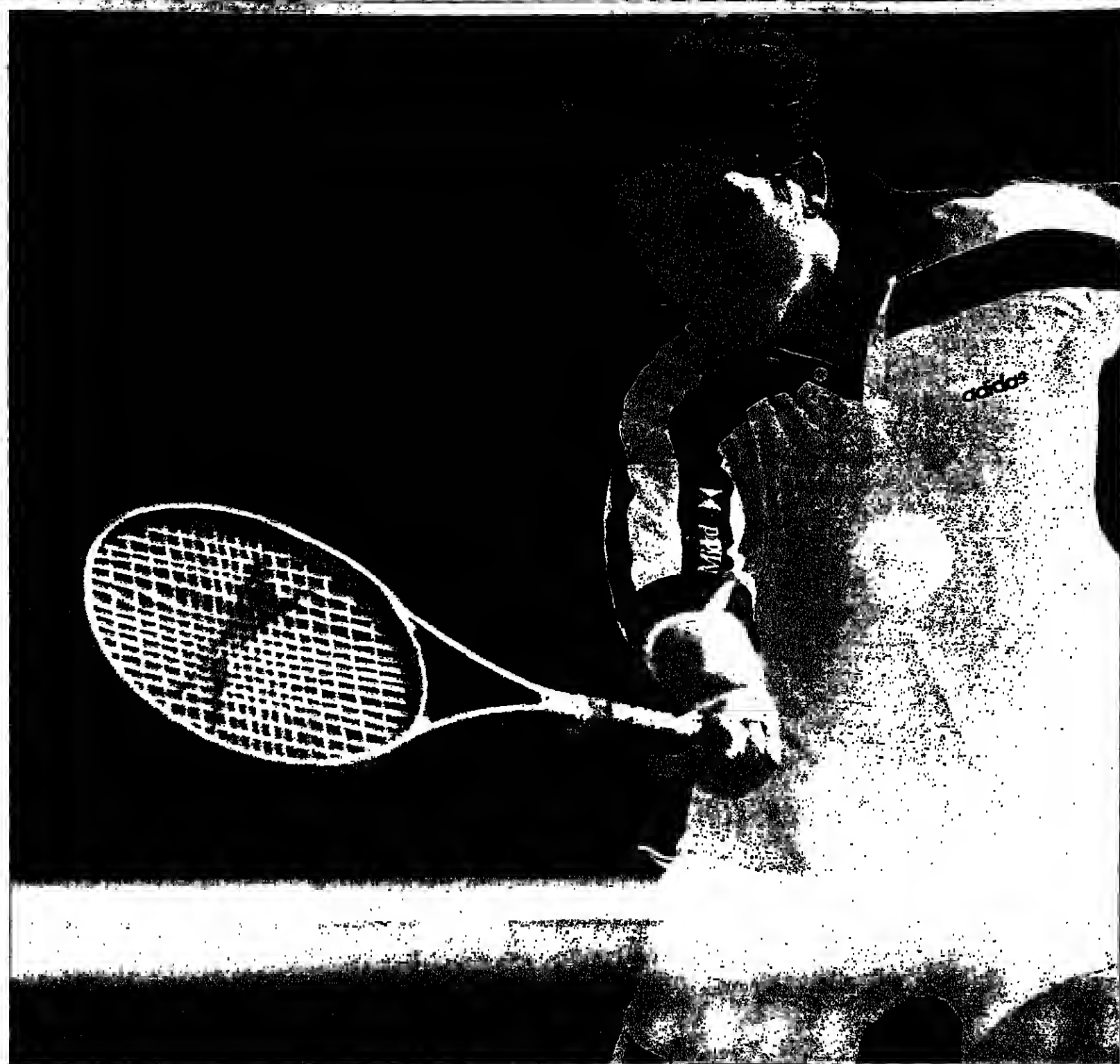
Sampras and Chang both faced jeers and whistles from the centre court crowd after their defeats yesterday. Both lost in straight sets, Sampras going down 7-6, 6-4 to the unseeded Jim Courier and Chang losing to the 54th-ranked Hernan Guncy, of Argentina, 6-3, 6-2. It was the first time ever that the top two seeds had lost in the first round at the Italian Open, which began in 1950.

The match between Sampras and Courier was tight in the first set. They traded service breaks in the first two games, but held serve into the tie-break. Backhand errors by Sampras helped Courier win the set in 49 minutes and the 1992 and 1993 Rome champion played steadily in the second set to win the match.

"With Pete, I'd rather play him in the first round than later," Courier said. "He gets more dangerous in the later rounds. We're all more susceptible in the first round."

Sampras also lost his first match in his previous tournament at Monte Carlo. Both defeats came on clay, a surface that Sampras has never conquered. He has won nine Grand Slam titles, but has never succeeded at the French Open - the only Grand Slam played on clay.

Chang, who has won four ATP Tour events this year, never found his form against



Tim Henman plays a volley during his comeback victory over Roberto Carretero at the Italian Open yesterday

Photograph: Clive Brunskill/Allsport

Guncy, who knocked out Jim Courier, then the fifth seed, in the second round here 12 months ago.

Chang led 4-0 on his own serve at 3-3 in the first set, but then dropped five straight points. The break put Guncy ahead 4-3, and he never looked back. The Argentinian, who lost in the first round at four of his last five clay-court events, broke Chang's serve in the second, fourth and final games of the second set.

"Today was my day," Guncy said. "I did everything well. He made a lot of mistakes and I took advantage of them."

Spain's Felix Mantilla, the 13th seed, also failed to reach the second round, losing 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 to the Australian Patrick Rafter. The reigning French Open champion, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, seeded fourth

here, moved into the second round with a 7-5, 7-6 victory over Javier Sanchez of Spain, while Boris Becker, of Germany, beat the Italian Andrea Gaudenzi 7-6, 6-2.

Three Spaniards food of the slow, red surface advanced. Albert Costa beat Germany's Alex Radulescu 7-5, 6-2, Sergi Bruguera beat Australia's Sandon Stolle 6-1, 6-4, and Alberto Berasategui defeated Daniel

Vacek of the Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4.

Steffi Graf, playing her first match after three months out with a knee injury, struggled to a three-set win over the American Chanda Rubin at the German Open in Berlin yesterday. Graf, who lost her world No 1 ranking to Martina Hingis in March, triumphed 6-3, 3-6, 6-1. "I felt very uncertain out there at first," Graf said. "I gave

away a lot of easy points. I wasn't in the shape that I would like to be. I am not very happy with my performance, but happy that I made it through my first match."

There were further injury problems yesterday for Jack Rowell, the England coach, before the two-test tour of Argentina, which also begins next week. Garath Archer, the teak-tough Newcastle lock whose temperament is only marginally less combustible than Clohessy's, pulled out of the trip with neck trouble and left Rowell in search of a third replacement second-row specialist. John Fowler and Martin Bayfield cried off last week and were replaced by Dave Baldwin and Danny Grewcock.

Clohessy gamble backfires on Lions

Fran Cotton and his fellow high rollers on the Lions selection panel yesterday discovered to their acute embarrassment that their gamble on Peter Clohessy, perhaps the most controversial choice for the three-test tour of South Africa, had backfired. Clohessy declared himself a non-runner - quite literally - for the trip after failing to survive the opening training session at the squad's base camp in Surrey.

Paul Wallace, the 25-year-old Saracens tight-head prop who succeeded Clohessy in Ireland's international front row following the latter's 26-week ban for stamping on a Frenchman's head last year, will travel in his countryman's place. According to Mark Evans, the Saracens director of rugby, Wallace was a better bet anyway. "He's fit, fast and bang in form," he said. "If he maintains the performance levels he produced in the last month of the league season, he'll be a sensation in South Africa."

Clohessy, a senior citizen at 31, had been playing for Queensland in the Super 12 tournament in recent weeks but was suffering from back problems when he received the Lions call. Although specialists in Australia passed him fit to travel, it was crystal clear yesterday that he was in no condition to square up to the Springboks.

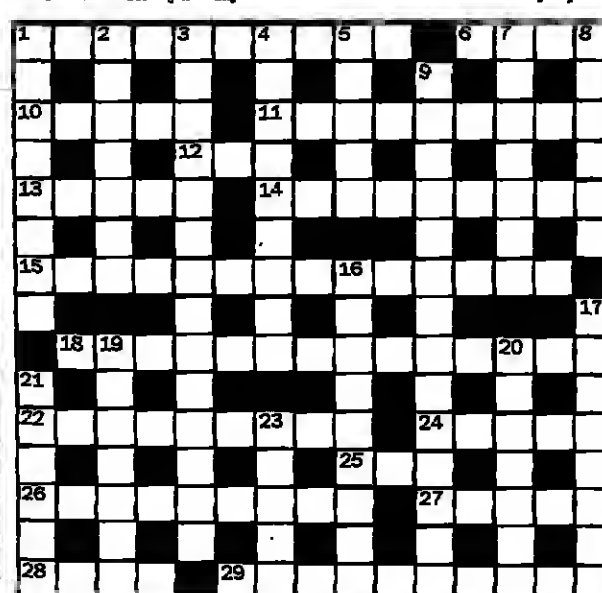
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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3298, Wednesday 14 May

By Aquila

Today's Solution



DOWN
1 Alice, for example, producing work like Gray's (7)
2 Mind gift with top knocked off? (6)
3 He drags his feet and trips on a carrot, clumsily (14)
4 Earth-moving machine? Duck (9)
5 Nonessential features off IOW, to the south (8)
6 Stuffy Henry leaves clean-shaven (7)
7 This style of decoration could be traced to Ohio (3,4)
8 English gripe endlessly, getting up to pour out (6)
9 First capital gains tax here in Berkshire? (5)

- ACROSS**
- One who works to improve dials and locks? (10)
 - Harbour transport (4)
 - One fell in front of S American mammal (5)
 - US lawmen attending non-U jousting contests (9)
 - Baronet's title is arranged by queen (3)
 - Spread fats, perhaps, around end of slice (5)
 - Dependence, these days, on the way we speak (9)
 - Rough seas a concern in patrolling? (14)
 - Commercial scale of import-export correspondence (7,2,5)
 - Well-off aunt turns out in long suit (9)
 - Famous day-school going back (5)
 - Field of battle action (3)
 - I eat lunch out under the table? (9)
 - Leitmotif opening The Meistersingers (5)
 - Peace of mind in rough seas (4)
 - Repositories concealing morose sort? (10)
 - Second blaze to miscarry (8)
 - Morning to replace church in ancient language (7)
 - Only one of these S. Atlantic islands is inaccessible, we hear (7,2,5)
 - Endless risk carrying horse in old coach (9)
 - Worked and played (5)

Leonhardsen heads Liverpool wanted list

Football
ALAN NIXON

Liverpool hope to sign the Wimbledon midfielder player Oyvind Leonhardsen this week with part of the £7m sale of Stan Collymore.

Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, has made an initial offer of just over £3m for the Norwegian, who has given the Reds notice that he will quit for nothing when his contract expires next summer.

The Wimbledon owner, Sam Hamman, is looking for a price closer to £4.5m for Leonhardsen, but a compromise figure should soon be reached.

Leonhardsen is seen by Evans as the player to give his midfield some drive as their bid to sign Paul Ince from Internazionale looks like faltering on financial grounds.

Evans is also looking for a new striker and centre-back after this season's disappointments. He has the £7m from Collymore's sale plus a further £5m to spend.

The Liverpool manager has watched Polish striker Marek Citko, and he is also considering Derby County's Igor Stimac for his defence.

Aston Villa completed the signing of Collymore yesterday for a club record fee of £7m. The deal takes the 26-year-old

former Nottingham Forest forward's total transfer fees over the last four years to £17.7m.

Collymore, who cost Liverpool a then British record £8.5m when he moved to Anfield in June 1995, signed a four-year contract with Villa with a further one-year option.

"I used to support Villa as a boy so this is really a dream move home for me," said Collymore, who lives only 30 minutes from Villa's training ground.

West Ham are resigned to losing Slaven Bilic in a £4.5m move to Everton today but their manager, Harry Redknapp, will use some of the money to offer Portuguese midfielder Hugo Porfiro a new deal to stay at Upton Park.

Porfiro's nine-month loan spell after the last Premiership game of the season at Manchester United on Sunday. But his contract with Sporting still runs out next month and West Ham's managing director, Peter Storrer, will meet the player and his agent tomorrow to negotiate a permanent free transfer to London.

Bilic, meanwhile, has still not formally announced his departure from West Ham but is expected to have a medical examination at Everton before completing a move which will make him one of the highest-paid defences in the Premier League. West Ham will show a huge profit on the deal, having paid just £1.6m to the German club Karlsruhe for Bilic only 18 months ago.

Bilic insisted he was reluctant to leave West Ham but wanted to join a bigger club capable of winning trophies. Everton finished below the London club in the final Premiership table.

Leeds have completed the £500,000 signing of the Scottish international full-back David Robertson from Rangers. The Italian clubs, Perugia and Torino, were both keen to land the 28-year-old Robertson, whose contract at Ibrox has expired.

Peter Reid has £6m to spend on the transfer market to spearhead Sunderland's promotion challenge back to the Premiership. The club's chief executive, John Pickling, yesterday gave Reid the nod to carry on as manager as Sunderland came to terms with the disappointment of relegation to the First Division.

"Peter has done an excellent job for Sunderland Football Club and he's still got a job to do," Pickling said. "The £10m we promised him is still available, less the £3.8m he has already spent."



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